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James Henry Lane London



RANK AND FASHION!

OR THE

MAZES OF LIFE;

A NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

“SATIRE—NOT MALEVOLENCE.”

BY MR. FRERE. 3

VOL. I.

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TO THE

AUTHOR OF WAVERLY.



SIR,

WHEN you, as a
Novel Writer, became a can-
didate for literary fame, I
rejoiced in the vast encrease
of entertainment, derivable

Gen. Reg. King 21 May 51 N. 10. 10. 34

from your productions. But having, since, set up in the same line, I most cordially wish that your Manuscripts had undergone a sort of *Ostracism*, ere their publication had been allowed ; and that the *casting shell* had devolved on me. — It would have been so disposed of, as to excite the heart-felt, though silent, thanks of my Brethren of the quill.

Indeed, Sir, the fecundity
 of the produce, together with
 its goodness, has made the
 Public so very fastidious, that
 the mental provender of other
 Growers find but few Con-
 sumers ; and Publishers aver,
 in the language of the Trade,
 that no other Novelties will
 now go *down*, maugre all
 their attempts at puffing them
up.
 However, Sir, since it is

not in my power to efface the impression of your Writings from the memory of your Readers, I politically adopt the modern method of concealing the smart of envy under the affectation of praise ; although constitutionally inclined to indulge in the blunt, old practice—of giving it vent, through the channel of vituperation. I, therefore, go along with the stream of Eu-

logists ; and, in order to make a fuller display of my candour, I hereby profess to shelter these pages under the sanction of your name, exclaiming with the Poet :

Say, shall my little Bark attendant sail,
Pursue thy triumph and partake the gale?

Having thus publicly declared myself the ardent Admirer of your literary talents, (would to Heaven they had been piled upon the shelves

of the Alexandrian Library)

I beg the honor of subscribing myself, with more politeness than truth,

Sir,

Your very humble,

very obsequious,

devoted Servant,

B. FRERE.

THE MAZES OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

AN INVITATION.

THE season for fashionable amusements in the Metropolis had expired. In every direction were hurrying from the plodding haunts of trade, honorables, right honorables, baronets and commoners, either to continue the same round of dissipation at watering places, or to recruit their health and finances by a few months' residence at their respective seats, that they might open the next winter campaign with greater probability of success.

The Earl of Piercefield had been eminently successful in most of his gambling ventures. He had well matched his race horses at New Market, well matched his own skill at Brookes, and pitched upon the right man in both his boxing matches; so that from these sources of emolument he had gained a sum little short of £40,000, nearly amounting to the whole rental of his numerous estates.

On the borders of North Wales, in the county of Salop, his lordship possessed a splendid mansion, surrounded by an extensive demesne. Thither he invited a numerous and *select* party to spend a few weeks, and to enjoy the diversion of grouse shooting on the lofty and dreary hills of the principality. Whether the invitation arose from the noble earl's good-natured disposition, or whether his pride was merely

desirous of commemorating his success, in the presence of those at whose cost it had been obtained, the historian is unable to decide. However, as the invitation promised pleasure and was considered an honor, it was warmly accepted and faithfully attended to.

In consequence, on the first of August 1810, Piercefield Castle, however spacious, could hardly contain the concourse of youthful noblemen and commoners with their menials that obtained admittance.

The genius of the place might at first assume that the feudal times, at their proudest æra, were returned. But the lists of folly are now-a-days open to pursuits so widely different, that the mistake could be but momentary. The baronial hall, still adorned with the mail clad portraits of the noble lord's progenitors, now, in the

dead of night, only resounded with the rattle of the dice box, and in each recess a *partie quaree* was silently plotting, not the downfall of the reigning monarch; but more loyally intent upon winning the odd trick; contending, not for the honors of the state, but for the four honors. A sight sufficiently provoking to make each full-length portraiture start from his frame, indignant at the degradation; but, in these degenerate days, symptoms of shame from a painted canvas cannot be more reasonably expected, than commiseration for his creditors in the breast of a losing gambler.

The countess dowager, mother of the present earl, (who was still a bachelor) and her two unmarried daughters, with their train of maidens, had sufficient employment in attending to the accommodation of the guests; and they succeeded: for the

festivities of Piercefield Castle were conducted in a manner becoming the hospitality of the noble owner, and his urbanity was highly gratifying to the feelings of his noble friends,—so, at least, the newspapers of the day phrased it for the information of the titled idlers not present. But, in plain truth, from morn till sun set, as there was very little to be done, save the business of the toilet and table with a few matches at billiards, time hung “*confoundedly*” heavy on their hands. Small talk with the ladies was found too fatiguing to be long endured. However sweetly Lady Clementina sang, however delightfully Lady Olivia played, as music hath no charms to sooth the gamester’s breast, from the music room, as soon as—nay, oft sooner than politeness would allow, they *instinctively* strolled to the dog-kennel and thence to the stables.

But alas, the shooting season was not yet begun, and riding and driving about the grounds, after a few days, was pronounced quite “ a bore.” Even wine had lost its stimulus: their spirits flagged as with more noise than glee they joined in the chorus of any bacchanalian song, and each in his heart, cursing the dulness of the place, condemned it as unfit for a gentleman to reside in. If any of the party happened to *wonder* what o’clock it was, every one glad to have something to do, would, as if by word of command, grasp the chain, and, in an instant, twenty watches were released from their fobs. However this act once or twice proved the father of some sport, to all but the losers at least; as betts were laid on disagreeing time-pieces, reference being made to, and decided by, the sun-dial in front of the house. Yet, notwithstanding

this resource and other relieving incidents, the last ray of the setting sun was watched with as much anxiety and hailed with as much fervor, as was the first dawn of its orient beams by the ancient Peruvians, worshippers of that planet during the reign of their Incas. However, the gentlemen found their spirits invariably revive with the exclusion of lingering day-light, and the admission of candles on the green cloth. They, then, immediately entered upon the business of the night.

CHAPTER II.

A PROPOSAL.

“**CONFOUND** you, Domville, said his neighbour to him, as the party was still at their wine, endeavouring to shake off his own dulness, by arousing a peaceful friend from his. “You have neither sung nor drank—come, let me fill for you. You are just a glass too low.”

“If I am dull,” replied Domville, checking the hand that was pouring him out a bumper. “If we all are dull, the fault must be chiefly ascribed to our hospitable entertainer.”

This unexpected declaration drew the stare of the company, first on the speaker, next on the noble earl at the head of the table, to see in what manner the latter would resent this seemingly implied censure. But before his lordship had fixed upon his mode and manner of reprisal, Domville went on.

“ My friend here ascribes my revery to dullness ; yet I can, with truth, assure him that the train of thoughts I was pursuing, afforded me the greatest satisfaction I have had this day. And gentlemen, added he, turning to all present, as they concern you as well as myself, allow me to unfold them to you.”

Their curiosity being somewhat excited, they listened with the more attention, as nothing in their conception worthier to engage it was then going on.

“ I did accuse my lord Piercefield of being the cause of that ennui, that depression of spirits, that seems to benumb every faculty of our bodies and minds, and with reason,—His lordship leaves us nothing to desire, we have no motive for exertion ; yet, if we wish to enjoy, our exertions alone can confer the blessing : for, as sure as polished steel, unrubbed by friction, becomes encrusted with rust, so sure our limbs will be palsied with torpor, and our minds with apathy, if we suffer both to remain thus inert.”

Here a short silence ensued, which was broken, by one of them exclaiming, “ what the devil will you have us do ? ”

The inquirer, by his stupid stare, bore sufficient conviction that his conceptions, poor man ! could not help him to a solution, were he nailed to his seat till doomsday.

“Nothing easier, resumed Domville, for the preventive is within ourselves, and, thank God, we have yet the power of using it.”

“How, Charles? would you have us run foot races in this hot, broiling, sun? I, for one, am not quite so mad.” Unheeding this interruption, Charles proceeded.—

“I have devised a plan for our health and diversion. It has novelty besides to recommend its adoption; it will make some noise in the world, and, if we go through it with spirit, we shall obtain considerable applause for our resolution and perseverance.”

Diversion, novelty, and applause were promises too tempting not to obtain a patient hearing, and thus further Domville :—

“I propose that the remainder of this evening be devoted as a trial, to see what

we can hereafter achieve. If our exertions give me reason to suppose we can attempt my plan with any probable prospect of success, to-morrow morning I will unfold it to you."

"In the devil's name, keep us not upon tenter-hooks: let us know the scheme, and then, if we like it, we—

"No Gentlemen, no; if my secret be not worth purchasing, it shall never be told."

Here Piercefield interfered.—"Well, let Domville have his own way. There is no dealing with these queer geniuses otherwise. But if he distrusts our game and bottom, I can tell him he is mistaken most egregiously. For did'n't you, Clavering, and George Devereux here, and I, with Phillip Pomfret, poor fellow! now dead and gone; did'n't we four, I say, make one

sitting of six and thirty full hours at hazard ; so that when we broke up, on the shutters being thrown open, so dazzled were we with the glare of day-light, that we could hardly see our way down stairs. If you want resolution and perseverance, here are both for you with a vengeance !”

“ And I my lord, “ cried another,” why did I lose that wheel-race against time, and some thousands to boot ? Why ? Not because I had not spunk to go through it : but because the near horse fell and broke his wind, damn his body ; and what is more provoking, I was within a hundred yards of the running post and full two minutes within my time.” His concluding with a passionate blow on the table, was the signal for a third to take up the cudgel.”

“ And in that drinking match that is still talked of, did I not win and pocket the

stakes, although the odds ran in favour of Tom Sackville at setting to. Yet I don't know what the plague ails me; but I have never been my own man since.—Come, push the bottle round.”

“And did'n't I,” vociferated a fourth.--- But here it were impossible to narrate every particular feat; for too impatient any longer to listen, they, all seized with a fit of boasting, became both the heroes and historians of their own tales.

“And thrice they vanquish'd all their foes,

“And thrice they slew the slain.” DRYDEN.

This ebullition having at length subsided, they, conceiving they had now fully established their pretensions to manhood, desired Domville to state what was further required at their hands.

It was simply this.—

That they would forthwith arm themselves with pikes, not military but agricultural, and rakes, straightway repair to a field of Farmer Stubble, about two miles distant, and there assist his men in getting in his crop of barley ! ! ! ! ! ! !

In some grassy enclosure, which the horned tribe — (I crave their lordship's pardon for this ignoble simile, which, after all, is somewhat analogous to the errand Domville would dispatch them upon.) —

In some grassy enclosure, which the horned tribe is quietly depasturing, should the sound of flute, or fiddle, or drum from the pathway affect their auricular sense, suddenly the necks downward stretched, assume an elevated curve, presenting the broad fronts and fierce aspects of the astonished animals, with staring eye-balls, distended nostrils, and ears erect, these

latter contending to rival in stiffness the pointed horns that tower above them.—But, should the strain be haply renewed, away scampers the senseless herd, snorting, prancing, kicking, roaring, bellowing, and, with tossing of heads, awkward gambols and twisted tails, galloping in wild confusion around the mead.

The first limb of the above simile is intended as typical of the stare of astonishment, excited by a proposal so derogatory to their rank and station. Merciful heaven! A British senator, a British nobleman, be seen abroad, shouldering pike or rake!....The second part illustrates not inaptly the bursts and repeated peals of laughter, the stamping of boards and striking of tables, the cries of *bravo, bravo*, hear him, silence, *encore*, which assailed the luckless wight on his asseveration of being in earnest.

“ Surely my lords and gentlemen, pursued the undaunted, the unruffled, Domville, as soon as he could be heard, It were doing ye injustice, in supposing ye indued with less sagacity and foresight than even your grooms and jockies are wont to possess.”

“ Aye, how is this?”

“ When any horse of your studs is matched for a race, they never omit subjecting the animal to a course of training, ere they bring him to the starting post.”

“ Very true, very true ; but what, in the name of common sense, have our horses and jockies to do with Farmer Stubble’s barley crop?”

“ The principal motive assigned by my lord Piercefield, in the invitation he has honoured us with, is the opportunity afforded for the diversion of grouse shooting

among the hills. You all know that this diversion, to be enjoyed, requires considerable bodily exertions. What preparations have yet been made, in order to cope with the hardships we are to encounter.—Hardships that cannot be sustained by substitutes, but must devolve on ourselves. Can the extensive, elevated, pathless, boggy regions we must explore in search of game be mastered by men, who habitually divide the twenty-four hours thus. In bed ten, lounging three, at table five, at cards six. Most assuredly not. Then, gentlemen, either give up the undertaking at once, or advance to the contest duly prepared for the victory.”

This conclusion *à la militaire* seemed to electrify the more vivacious of the party. —“Faith, there is some reason in this, and a great deal too.—Suppose we try.—

But hang it, can't we put it off to another day,"

"My friends, the time for procrastination is gone by. In five days hence the season commences. We must be ready to take the field. Not a moment should be lost.—Come, let us, by one heroical effort, break asunder the slavish bands of sloth, and thus become our own masters. My Lord Piercefield, we want but a leader: set us the example, and we follow."

"Mr. Domville, replied his lordship with a smile, I should be proud to lead where you direct; but, as I am not invested with any command, I can only put it to the vote."—

To the vote—to the vote—was echoed around.

"Those gentlemen, cried the earl, who chuse to become, for the evening, the as-

sistants to Farmer Stubble, let them stand up."

The whole party rose.

"Those gentlemen who still prefer keeping table, let them resume their seats."

None offered.

"Then we are all agreed."

Agreed, agreed, was the general cry, and out of the house they sallied, vociferating for pikes and forks. Furnished with these, they, with the eagerness of school-boys just released from discipline, hastened to the scene of action.

CHAPTER III.

AN EXPEDITION.

WELL might farmer Stubble be astonished at the sudden invasion of his field by the noisy, disorderly, panting, well-dressed crew, now making towards him, brandishing their agricultural implements with violent gesticulations. All labour immediately ceased and every eye was fixed on the adventurers. The farmer at first inferred, from their appearance, that they were a hostile force, intent upon giving him battle for the possession of his barley ; but,

though he dismissed that apprehension on perceiving his landlord at the head of the party, so struck was he with wonder and anxiety at this singular visitation, that he was utterly disabled from doing the honors of the *field*: and, with pitchfork erect, he stood stock still on the waggon he was then loading.

“ Master Stubble, cried his lordship jocosely, I have brought with me a few friends, who are desirous of affording you some assistance in your labours. I hope you will not spare them. I am accused of having kept them too well; on you they call to repair the mischief I have committed.”

“ My lord you and the gentlemen do me too much honor; but I cannot think”——

“ Very true, as you were going to say; but with your permission, since here we

are, here we work. — Come, gentlemen, be doing—*Qui m'aime, m'imite.*”

So saying, the noble earl very gallantly struck his pike into a small heap of barley, in order to lift the said heap into the waggon, and they all followed the example of their leader. But alas, the aggregate amount of their labour but slowly filled the bed of the vehicle. Some, having piked more than they could well raise, spent themselves in bootless exertions; others, collecting but scanty forks full, pitched it away with such violence that, flying over the intended receptacle, it fell scatteringly on the other side, over the heads of their companions, who were not slow in returning the compliment, whilst others, having succeeded in lifting up a heavy load, overbalanced themselves, and with their pikes, burden and all, tumbled backwards. The

real workmen, in respect to their *honors*, at first stood aloof, hats off, content to become spectators of the scene. The oft repeated miscarriages of their new allies, at first excited their surprise, then produced a smile, then knowing winks were exchanged, then they grinned, and finally the feats of the noble squad brought their risible faculties into play. Stubble by this time discovered that, though he had received an increase in numbers, he had gained no accession of strength. He also found to his cost that his elevated station, being the post of honor, proved, as it should be, the post of danger. For the pikes of the more successful, who had contrived to throw their mite into the waggon, more than once drew blood from the honest farmer's legs, who now exhibited much alertness in nimbly skipping away from the well-meant offering.

At length, seeing much bustle and little work, in his own defence he called on his men to direct and assist their lordships. With *their* help, the waggon was soon sufficiently filled, and, being replaced by an empty one, it drew off the field attended by the master, who was desirous of superintending its unloading upon the rick. On his return, he “full surely” relied, “good easy man,” on an equal quantity being ready to take the same direction; but, to his vexation, espied the vehicle *in statu quo* and his whole strength, *effective* as well as *nominal*, quietly laying under arms, awaiting his approach. The fact was, that a contention of much importance had arisen in his absence among the gentlemen, which contention, as it was usual with them, merged into a wager.

To beguile the time till sufficient means

could be obtained for its decision, they, in imitation, we will suppose, of *Homeric* and *Virgilian* games, during a suspension of hostilities, amused themselves, some in tumbling the raking lasses upon the barley-cocks, others in exhibiting their agility in leaping over them; these were hard at hop, skip and jump, and others contended who could fling their rakes and pitchforks to the greatest distance; whilst a few were spouting to the staring rustics whatever classic lore they still retained from their university education.

But sure my lord Piercefield was more decorously employed. — Not he; he was as mad as the rest. And Mr. Domville? Not a whit wiser. — But here I beg leave to recal that expression. Then they were all wise, or, at least,

wisely employed. For I define wisdom enjoyment of any kind, taken without injury to one's self and without detriment to others.

From those sports, however, they desisted as the farmer and his team returned into the field. Stubble was about to rebuke his men for the loss of that time, of which *he*, at least, well knew the value. But the earl generously interposed, took the whole blame on himself, and concluded by requesting the loan of both waggons and team, merely to decide a trifling wager of half a thousand pounds sterling.

Such deference the laborious classes of society pay to those whom they falsely call their *bettors*, that honest Stubble, though at that time in a dis-

position somewhat gruff, answered with complacent alacrity.

“ Yes, sure, My lord, and welcome.”

Equally accommodating, I believe, he would have proved, had he not been at that time in treaty for a renewal of the lease.

Immediately an equal number of horses were harnessed to each vehicle, manned by an equal number of rakers, fillers and loaders (I mean those of gentle blood). A gold stop watch was placed in the hands of master Stubble, with an injunction to hoist signal at the expiration of thirty minutes; and to work both sides fell, with as much fury, as if their very existence depended upon the issue of the contest. Though several ancles were sprained, though

their toes were oft alarmingly threatened by the carriage wheels, though there happened a few tumbles from the waggons, and though the tumblers bled in the same manner as farmer Stubble had done, no serious accident occurred.

The time being expired, Stubble was desired to ascend each waggon and to declare, after a close inspection, which contained a greater portion of the crop, and which was loaded in the more *husband-like* manner.

The farmer gravely complied, whilst they stood around the teams in breathless expectation: minutely examined each, too cautious to decide hastily, aware that the fate of five hundred pounds hung on his lips; perambulated within the extent of each waggon, felt with his

feet, looked about him, stroked his chin, smoothed his hair, hemmed and hawed, and pondered, at length pronounced himself unable to determine which deserved the preference, at the same time declared the work *pretty* well done on both sides, *all things considering*.

The decision was received with loud cheers from each party. The shouts, however, imparted rather defiance to their opponents than satisfaction at the verdict.

This vociferation having subsided, Stubble thought it high time to attend to his own concerns. He coolly ordered the waggons to be drawn along side of each other, threw into one the contents of both; and with the addition of a few more cocks made up a load, gave it in charge to some of his men, and, in order

to prevent further mischief, politely and politically invited the gentlemen to walk in and refresh themselves after the fatigues of the day. Thirsty, panting, and wearied, in they went nothing loth.

The good woman and her two buxom daughters aware of their approach, for they were heard almost as far off as seen, were ready to receive them. She did the honours of her house with that sort of friendly, untaught, courtesy, which, to those only accustomed to the glossy urbanity of the higher circles, was the more gratifying. For the same reason, they relished the plain food set before them, and glibly down their parched throats went each goblet of the farmer's home-brewed beverage. I must also record for the credit of the gentlemen,

that the blushing damsels were suffered to wait on them without molestation, in the performance of their hospitable office. It is true that a few liberties would have been taken, but, as the girls were *really* modest, these were soon repressed.

Sol was now fast sinking in the West. They arose to depart. Stubble, though he made several attempts to detain them, was not sorry to see them outside his precincts; for, in the busy time of harvest as in the heat of a general engagement, the place of honour for both farmer and commander is in the midst of their men.

Their lordships' spirits were up; indeed most of them somewhat tipsy. Unused to liberal potations of strong malt decoction, their heads owned the potency

of the *quantum* they had swallowed. In consequence they felt themselves in a right cue for adventures; though alas but few occurred, and those of a very trifling cast.

On their return, a bevy of maidens, *vulgo* wenches, were stepping towards them, each carrying a couple of wooden bottles. These bottles were on their way to the replenishing tap, acting from morn till night as conveyancers of the hogs-head's contents to the living receptacles,—

Who toil'd and drank, and drank and toil'd, and when
Their toiling ended, would be drinking still.

A few gallant or gallánt volunteers now detached themselves from the van, in order to intercept their progress and thus cut off the intended supply. But so alarmed were the fair opponents at the boldness of this attack, that, without wait-

ing for close quarters, they took flight with the velocity of birds, discharging however at their pursuers the round missiles they carried; one of which hit the foremost just on his pericranium, and, from the concussion, both substances emitted a *hollow* sound. The assailant, though not a little staggered, still kept in pursuit. But this modern Daphne proved herself an over-match for her contemporaneous Apollo, who, finding that the longer he ran the further he was from the object, at length desisted and regained the main body, who diverted with the attack and pursuit, now laughed heartily at his mischance.

One of his companions thus gravely moralized on this adventure. "To succeed with the fair sex, high or low, there is but one method, which is pithily

compressed into the Latin adage.—*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*. Now, as far as the *modus*, you reversed the maxim and, by so doing, lost the chance of proving what could be done *ad rem*. I wish to God, Gentlemen, another opportunity would occur, merely to afford you a practical illustration of my theory.”

His prayer was heard. At that very moment the blithe carol of a milk-maid saluted their ears. She was nimbly tripping along towards a stile that led into the lane in which they were, steadily carrying on her head a pail, nearly brimful of the lacteous juice.

“Thou art in luck’s way,” said one. “Here is as fair a chance as heart can wish. — Now Harry — now Harry,” cried the rest in tones of encouragement.

“Hush! hush!” — replied Sir Harry

Offham ; “ be still, stand at bay and mind me.”

By this time, the heedless nymph got from the stile into the lane, and, to her disquietude, found her path impeded by a score of dashing bucks, wild as their prototypes in the season of love. From out of the herd our practical Theorist exhibited himself, and softly advancing with amorous visage, low bowing, gentle demeanour, well counterfeited wooings, and “ sighing like a furnace,” down on his knees he dropped before the fair one, tenderly exclaiming with clasped hands :

“ My love — my life — my angel — my goddess — my *Dulcinea* ! Pity — oh have pity on the throbs of thy hapless, helpless, heartless, swain ; who — who — who loves thee, doats on thee, burns for thee,

and, if thy cruelty so ordain it, dies for thee."

Having sufficiently plied her with the *Suaviter*, he now thought it expedient to try the efficacy of his *Fortiter*.

"But by Venus (passionately vociferating and flinging his arms round her waist) I can hold no longer. Thy sweet, lovely, beauteous self is the only cooler that can quench the blaze of this combustible frame."

During the first part of this address, the astonished maid with a sort of hysterical giggle kept fidgeting, now on one foot, then on the other; but becoming terrified by the sudden vehemence of his manner, she attempted to spring from him: when, alas, in the struggle caused by her detention, the dairy utensil above, reeling to and fro, at length lost its equipoise, and

receiving an additional tilt from the very hand that even in her trepidation, was dispatched to its assistance, it up-set and in its descent fairly *capped* the love-burnt swain, proving with the help of its contents an instantaneous extinguisher of his flame.

The nymph, thus released, lost no time in seeking her safety in flight, screaming as she sped in woeful accents for the loss of her milk, and in terror for the consequence to herself from *me Stubble*. She was out of sight in an instant.—Not so her pail-crowned gallant.

From his genuflections up he started in darkness, and, with arms outstretched, he spun several times round, till in a fit of rage he struck the pail from off his head, jumping about with antic gesticu-

lations, and exhibiting himself to the delighted spectators, his hair and clothes completely saturated with the unctious liquid, the excess whereof, streaming down every way from top to toe, tracked him on the ground wherever he moved.

“ D ——n, hell and the furies,” was his first exclamation amidst the shouts of all present; but soon ashamed of his disaster, aware of the ridiculous figure he cut, enraged at the merriment he excited, and feeling no predeliction for the comforts of his *shower-bath*, he abruptly left his scoffers, with intent of pursuing his way alone; but being overtaken, he was with much entreaty persuaded to return in their company, on the suggestion that his woeful pickle would be better concealed in the midst

of the rest, whose apparel, more or less discomposed, tended to keep his own in countenance.

As they approached the house, my Lord Piercefield intent on another species of frolic, had the malice to introduce the whole party plump into the tea-room, wherein my lady dowager and her two daughters with some female visitors of distinction were sitting, wondering at the abrupt departure and long absence of the gentlemen.

Their wonder arose to astonishment when in they all stumbled in wild disarray. Hats awry and crushed, hair disordered, cravats loose, frills out of plait, breasts bare, coats torn, hose falling, shoes soiled, legs bleeding, hearts panting, and flushed faces, appeared still more strikingly incongruous in the presence of

the rich, elegant, well-regulated, dresses of the stately, dignified, fair beholders. A sensation of awkwardness kept the gentlemen stationary in the centre of the apartment, looking disconcerted at each other; but this sensation was rapidly subsiding, when some, on casting their eyes on the rueful aspect of Sir Henry, their pointing at the object created a tittering, this tittering soon rose to an ill constrained laughter, which exploded in bursts of merriment: the infection became irresistible; and a general chorus of laughter, in which the baronet himself joined, set them all at their ease. These continued peals were the longer kept up, as they attempted to narrate to the ladies the cause and effects of their long absence; exhibiting in triumph for the

greater credibility of the tale, the wooden bottles and milk pail they had carried home, in exchange, I suppose, for the pikes and rakes left behind.

At length they withdrew to qualify themselves by a change of dress for seats at the tea-table. As they successively re-entered the apartment, the assumed gravity of every in-comer was soon compelled to give way to the laughter which his presence excited. Indeed, though some complained of fatigue, some of concussions, some of contusions, some of lacerations, and some still felt the prickly beards of barley grating their skin, they kept it up till late in the night before *cards* were mentioned. Even then the proposal met with so faint a reception, that only one table could be formed. The play

proved so languid, the fits of yawning so frequent, that the party soon broke up; and, following the example of the remainder, they retired to their places of repose, now not nominally but *really* so; no longer restless on their downy pillows in feverish repinings at their losses, or at the small quantum of their gains; they, like the toiling labourers whose vocation they had assumed, in sound sleep closed at once their eye-lids, in which state the morning far advanced found them; so did their servants, who came to inform them that Mr. Domville was waiting for their appearance in the drawing room.

This summons reminds me of a sin of omission I have committed. But, if the critical reader objects to its being noticed here, he has my assent to trans-

pose the passage to whatever part of the last page or two his acumen may point out.

The omitted passage is this :

“ Now Domville,” cried one of the gentlemen, ere they broke up for the night, “ honestly declare, how did we behave in this our arduous trial? Are we fit to be trusted with this your mighty secret?”

“ As to behaviour, I shall reply in the words of farmer Stubble, *pretty well, all things considering.*”

“ This won’t do; come, no equivocation. Speak out.”

“ Well,” said Domville, with great gravity of tone and manner, “ to those gentlemen who so far feel an interest in its disclosure as to shew their morning faces at ten instead of the wonted hour

of twelve, I will impart it; but from the inveterate sluggard it shall be withheld as useless, not possessing sufficient inducement to reclaim him from his ignoble sloth."

They all promised to appear at the appointed hour, and gave directions to their servants to be called up accordingly.

CHAPTER IV.

C'est un homme isolé, qui vit en Volontaire ;
Qui n'est Bourgeois, Abbé, Robin, ni Militaire :
Qui va, vient, veille, sue, et se tourmentant bien,
Travaille jour et nuit, et jamais ne fait rien,

PIRON.—METROMANIE.

WHILST the gentlemen are busily employed in preparing themselves for their morning appearance, we will bring the Reader to a more intimate acquaintance with Mr. Domville, who has hitherto figured as the principal personage in this narrative.

The Honorable Charles, Nayland, Dom-

ville, was or is the son of the late viscount of that name by a second marriage. His lordship's first lady brought him that which all the world covets: a considerable influx of wealth with noble and powerful connexions. Mr. Domville's mother by no means ranked so high, she was only an actress; nor did she long move in the splendid circle traced by this dignifying alliance. She died a few years after the birth of her son. Her early dissolution failed, however, to assuage the displeasure of her husband's titled relations occasioned by so ignoble a connexion. Whatever they had to bestow was conferred on the eldest son to the utter exclusion of Charles. The former in consequence became at the demise of his father, who died intestate, the wealthiest and most powerful adherent

to the then ministry. Indeed, so grateful were they for his endeavours to strengthen the hands of his majesty's government, that they exalted his peerage to an earldom. This young nobleman was haughty and obstinate, and when afterwards contending with his equals for pre-eminence, his own selfishness made him cunning, acute and active.

In the son of the actress, a fanciful assertor of the influence of breed might trace the *cross* of plebeian admixture with patrician blood. In his character were blended qualities nearly opposite. Proud, yet condescending, resentful, yet forgiving, fastidious, but not contemptuous, restless, yet fond of ease, careless, yet not inconsiderate, dissipated, yet thoughtful. Now at the very top of fashion, both in dress and amusements, then a sloven and

a recluse. In town he sighed after the sweets of retirement, in the country longed for the dissipation of the metropolis. His ardent imagination allowed but a scanty scope for the operations of judgment. "Why, Sir," would he say with self complacency, "I always make it a rule to act upon the feelings of the moment." No wonder then that the horse at times ran away with the rider, instead of the rider directing his horse. He did not fully enjoy the pleasures that fell in his way, because he knew that better were to be had; nor was he satisfied with his then situation, because he felt conscious that he had neglected the means of improving it. He might boast of a mind excursive, even vigorous, yet too often unsteady and unpersevering. He was one of those whom the wonders of art and nature could

delight but not overpower. Of a palace, he would remark that it could have been more stately, of a mountain, that a higher might be found. Against real misfortunes he bore up manfully ; but would childishly fret at petty vexations. He had a real taste for the three sister arts but excelled in neither. Yet, though not *quite* a Lord Byron in poetry, the short-winded effusions of his muse obtained currency among the fashionable amateurs. Nay, in his attempt at an epic poem, he had got as far as the invocation, had finished one scene of a tragedy, courted the comic muse even to the conclusion of one act, and actually completed one farce in two. In this as in other pursuits, his attempts were too desultory or too multifarious to be successful. Thus he failed to gratify his desire of distinction, an ambition most young men of genius feel, because his

indolence or impatience precluded the requisite perseverance. In more figurative language, that fortress of which, in all probability, he would have become master in the course of a regular siege, he was compelled to retire from, having exhausted his strength in fruitless attempts at storming it. He had nevertheless acquired a sort of ascendancy over his youthful equals, from the consciousness of superiority that gave him a tone of decision: — it fixed the wavering and awed the timid. He was, upon the whole, one of those numerous characters, whom the smiles of fortune deteriorate and the frowns of adversity improve.

In the qualities of the heart, it certainly could not be said of him as Sallust observes of Cato :

“ *Esse quam videri.*”

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But he might, with truth, apply to himself the well known line of Terence:

“Homo sum : humani nihil a me alienum puto.”

That his pride did not divest him of humanity the following anecdote will shew.

Having successfully contended with a Duke *in embryo* for the honour or comfort of a back-seat, he afterwards had the carriage stopped, in order to cover the postillion's jacket with his own great coat from the pelting of a cold, merciless, winter storm. He got laughed at for his pains by the unfeeling, warmly clad, companions of his journey, and more than repaid by a thankful stooping of the head, even to the horse's mane, from the lad, as he, alighting, left the vehicle.

When our Hero grew up to man's estate,

many and excellent were the plans he laid down for the regulation of his conduct: though but little wisdom was yet apparent in his intercourse with the world. This the following incident will illustrate.—

A duel between two great political leaders, was at that time the prevailing topic of conversation. Domville was loud in his censures of both.

“It is a shameful weakness,” cried he, “in men who are acknowledged and act as *Leaders*, to be *led* by an absurd custom, begotten in the dark ages. Courage indeed! It is downright pusillanimity. Believe me, Sir, it requires much greater courage to decline a challenge than to accept it. And were the case mine, I trust I should shew a fortitude, unaffected by the clamour of the unreflecting, servile

herd, blind imitators of the follies of our gothic ancestors."

These observations drew upon him a satirical remark; Domville's reply was to the full as keen; his opponent tartly replied, he angrily retorted: the altercation grew warmer and warmer, and soon became a downright quarrel. A challenge given and accepted was the consequence; the parties met: and Mr. Domville had a full month's leisure, under *surgical* hands, to reconsider his system of ethics, to which sundry weighty improvements were doubtless added during the *tedium* of his long confinement. Amongst others, it is presumed, two maxims were not forgotten, namely—

A dogmatical tone hardly ever becomes erring man, and still less inexperienced youth: and censures, publicly and harshly

delivered, must expect retorts equally unsparing.

“ Le matin je fais des projets,

“ Le reste du jour des Sottises.”

Says Voltaire pleasantly of himself; he might have with equal truth included the whole civilized race in the satire.

His first political act was a glaring infringement of that constitution, to defend which in all its purity, he was about to take a solemn oath before the Speaker of the House of Commons. He was returned a member for one of his father's boroughs, *before* he had attained the age prescribed by law. Two or three fluent speeches, more remarkable for a vivacity bordering upon brilliancy, than for any acute reasoning or reach of thought, gave the ministry some hopes of his becoming a

usefull ally in their cause, and created a proportionate degree of alarm in the opposition; if we are to judge of their effect by the quantum of praise and blame contained in the *Courier* and *Chronicle* of the day. But Mr. Domville

“ Too fond of the right to pursue the expedient.”

GOLDSMITH.

Could never become a blind adherent to either of the ruling parties: and a subsequent and more intimate acquaintance with both had only the effect of cooling his zeal.

“ *Il entendit des maximes nouveaux; il vit des mœurs encore plus nouvelles.*”

ROUSSEAU.

However, he still retained his seat in parliament, but the borough he represented had become, by his father's death, the property of his brother. The sub-

mission in all political matters, required by the one, could not subsist with the independence asserted by the other. An open rupture ensued. Through the intervention of friends, an interview was brought about, from which they parted sworn foes. Of the censures this incident called forth, Domville, whether more blameable or only less considered, bore, by far, the the greater share. The young man indignant turned from those worshippers of power, and, now fired with the example of Greek and Roman worthies, he longed to emulate their deeds:—thus he set about it.

Giving to his *private* wrongs the importance of a *national* grievance, he threw himself into the arms of the opposition and commenced patriot, to serve his country and to spite his brother. “The Gen-

tle men opposite" hailed him with as much semblance of exultation, as if the defection of one individual had broken the ministerial phalanx. Chief of all, my lord Piercefield, having the good of his country much at heart, received him with the most flattering marks of distinction. But, alas, we are compelled to admit that this display of patriotism was solely prompted by an eagerness to mortify Domville's brother, to whom the earl bore an irreconcilable grudge, because the former had defeated him in a late electioneering contest.

Our Hero was in consequence invited to the festivities of the castle. Thither he repaired, but soon weary of a repetition of the same scenes, he already wished himself away.

One morning, he left his chamber full

four hours before any of his companions were stirring, in order to rid himself of an acute head-ache brought on by the over night's intemperance. Strolling from the park into the fields, he came to farmer Stubble's barley piece. The laborious strength, useful activity, and unaffected gaiety of the men at work, forcibly struck him as contrasted with the dull, unprofitable, rounds of pastime in which he had so often borne a share. He returned to the castle, his mind fraught with fresh schemes of improvements, romantic notions of setting a glorious example, of discarding prejudices, of honoring merit for merit's sake: thence, ascending to the origin of society, he broached strange doctrines of right and wrong. Lord protect us! Had he dared to give publicity to his then thoughts, His Majesty's Attor-

ney General would have probably dogged his heels *Ex officio*. The result would have been, a crowded trial, materials for the newspapers, one thousand pounds to the king, and twelve calendar months incarceration of the daring criminal.

I here close this long, but very imperfect account of the Hero I have chosen, with the addition, that an alliance is in contemplation between that gentleman and the fair lady Olivia, whom he is become the avowed, but not very sedulous, admirer.

But, ah me! On a re-perusal of this chapter, I find that I have omitted the most essential part. Not one word is devoted to the description of his person! How can I hope to excite the sympathy of the fair sex in the perusal, unless I sup-

ply the omission.—I will set about it forthwith.

Upon second thoughts, however, I find it more adviseable to leave the subject open to each lady's fancy ; the chasm will be then filled up to the satisfaction of all. Yet, in three points, two negatives and one affirmative, I must request their agreement with me, and from the well known benignity of their dispositions I hope that each will be conceded : Namely —

Mr. Domville, whether of complexion dark or fair, was *not* red haired—was *not* bandy legged — but *was* most elegantly gifted with the fashionable elongation of limb.

CHAPTER V.

A PROJECT.

OUR Projector, as he paced up and down the spacious saloon, had sufficient leisure to digest his plan and arrange his thoughts ere his audience could be collected. With the help of such very imperfect instruments as the present inmates of Piercefield Castle afforded and himself no very expert workman, the simple youth, in the warmth of his cogitations, fancied he could bring about a reformation; to effect which, the press and the pulpit have hitherto wrote and preached in vain. For a time self-

delusion was complete. The air-built castle, fully blown, floated aloft; let it but alight *solidly* upon earth, and the task is done.

“*Da mihi punctum terram movebo.*”
Exclaimed Archimedes.

This phrase, as translated by our Dreamer, runs thus: *Give me hearers, and I will mend their manners.*

The hearers were at hand, they now claimed a right, earned by their toils of yesterday, to a disclosure of his secret.

“Gentlemen,” exclaimed Domville with emphasis, jumping upon a chair, the better to be heard and seen, important indeed is the subject that — — — —

“A speech! a speech!” was the interrupting cry—a set speech! a royal speech!—a speech *from the throne*! shouted Piercefield, improving upon the idea.—Done,

done, done! vociferated the rest, clapping their hands and stamping the boards to express their applause.

Immediately, they lifted up and placed upon a table a huge, crimson, velvet, chair, in which they fain would have seated the intended orator. Whilst he was declining the proffered honor, the earl re-entered, dragging after him his grandfather's robe of state, an immense flowing perriwig of the 17th century was carried by a second, whilst a third held a well-plumed cocked hat of the same period.

Our Hero beheld the regalia advancing with a satirical smile that threatened retaliation; he very good humouredly ascended the table, was soon arrayed in his robe and seated on his throne. Sir Henry Offham, whose talent for drollery revived as he recovered from the effects of the late mis-

chance, perceiving that some fun was going forward, naturally volunteered himself as the Jack-pudding of the farce.

His Majesty gravely waited till the clamour of applause excited by his royal presence had subsided, he then majestically arose and awfully waving his sceptre, *Alias*, the butt end of a cue purloined from the billiard room, thus addressed his loving subjects:—

“ My lords and Gentlemen.”—

Hem! affectedly coughed the baronet—

“ I have called you round my person, at this unwonted season, in order to devise and adopt the means necessary for the preservation of the realm, at the present alarming crisis.—Alarming not so much on account of the continued success of the foe, as from the absence in my nobility of that spirit, which, if evinced by them, would

electrify the whole population to repel, as become Englishmen, the threatened invasion. But, when I look about me for the chief supporters of the Throne and the defenders of their own inheritance, what do I find? Bodies without strength,—minds without energy,—souls without stamina,—and hearts without daring. Merciful heaven! must I hail such the *Barons* of England! That honourable appellation, when applied to you, sounds as the bitterest irony, and you ought to feel it as the most cutting satire. Ye Nevils, ye Percies, ye Howards, ye Russells and Sydneys, whose greatness proclaims our littleness, where are ye?

Dead and gone, my Liege.

“Gone, indeed! and not one spark of their better part have they transmitted to their descendants. Rank and the choicest gifts

of fortune are conferred on you; and where is the return?—What have you done for the nation?

Mortgaged my estate.

“What have you done for yourselves?

Lead a jovial life.

“What have you done for posterity?

Presented it with three chubby brats, an't please your Majesty.”

This last sally excited a general laugh, even the Orator's rigid features relaxed into a smile, but reassuming all his sternness, he proceeded.

“Posterity, I fear, will find these brats just such as is now their progenitor,—not a benefit but an *incumbrance*.”

This retort turned the tables on the interrupter.

“A smart rap on the knuckles, faith!—Egad, Sir Harry, he has got you on the

hip." Domville, however, as if unconscious of the smartness of the rap, proceeded.

"Alas! what are we all, but incumbrances, and the worst of incumbrances, occupying the most important stations in life to the exclusion of those much better qualified. Nay, we are fraudulent debtors, who, with full means in our power, withhold the payment of a debt, the most sacred that can be contracted.—Yet we dare boast of our *honor*—honor indeed! It is a gross delusion. Were we not as blind to our dearest interests, as we are supine in the execution of our duties, we should know—we should feel—that, in the punctual discharge of that very debt, real honor, true glory consists.

Hang glory, says my tailor, give me cash instead, or a bill for my bill.

"What is then that mental disease that

benumbs our faculties, degrades our nature, assimilating us more and more to the brute creation? It is **SELFISHNESS**—downright selfishness; not the loftier sort that prompts ambition and leads through dangers to aggrandizement. A man infected with that vice may be criminal, yet is not mean. But *our* selfishness is a grovelling passion, begotten by indulgence, fostered in indolence, and fed with luxuries. It enervates the body and kills the soul.”

Shades and shadows all.

“Are ye earnestly desirous of fulfilling your high destination, of dignifying yourselves and your country, of rivaling your ancestors in deeds of pith, ye must re-trace your steps, and endeavour to match the glory of those days long past.

“This paper contains the plan I would

submit to your approval. Let no one deride the feebleness of the means contained therein for so arduous an undertaking.—View it but as the spring-head of a mighty stream. The means are intended but to promote the first trial, and it were defeating my own purpose, to subject you to a trial, beyond your present strength.

Wooden swords for babes—hem !

“ Gentlemen, as I pass in review the various epochs recorded in history, it is not on the æra of Greece and Rome that I love to dwell with most complacency: I own, I prefer to those the days of chivalry.”

Oh ! Oh ! joults, tilts, and tournaments.

Broken bones and bloody pates.

Here the countess dowager and her fair daughters stole from behind the screen, under whose shelter they had hitherto listened.

“ Oh, what an association of swelling sensations—of lofty sentiments, the very name begets. Love and Glory, the two sublimest incitors to magnanimous actions are coupled with that name. Oh, my friends, as in the days of yore, let love lead to glory, and glory crown love. Happily for us the British fair are still worthy the homage paid to the charms, to the virtues of their high-minded predecessors. Let us, then, look around us—let each select the dame of his thoughts.—Let—let—let—”

Here our Orator perceived the unexpected addition to his auditory. He was at a stand, but soon recovering his presence of mind.

“ *My Lords and Gentlemen, my chancellor will tell you the remainder.*”

Then throwing off the incumbering robes

and leaping from the table, he hurried to lady Olivia and laid at her feet, himself kneeling, both the wooden sceptre and plummy hat, fervently exclaiming--

“O fairest of the fair.” Accept me for your *Chevalier*, and by those heart-enthraling charms, by the purity of that bosom, I swear to attempt, at your bidding such deeds of heroism, as when achieved, will entitle me to claim YOU as mine own.”

The plaudits excited by this effusion of words and gallantry of action were rapturous and continued. The lady, round whom the gentlemen crowded, felicitations in their looks and voices, behaved prettily. She blushed, and smiled, and fanned, and ogled, and bridled, and, with a graceful concession, held out her lily hand on which a thousand kisses were imprinted. In an instant, sir Knight was seated

beside his Fair one receiving, with all the modesty he could display very many compliments on his oratorical talents. But, alas! the value of such compliments the Receiver himself could but hold very cheap, when he beheld the attention of the Bestowers attracted by a species of entertainment infinitely inferior, in his estimation, to the one he had afforded.

Sir Henry Offham, who had absented himself, re-entered. He was seen striding with great bustle towards the table which he ascended; not satisfied with that commanding eminence, he exalted himself upon the chair of state on which he now stood erect, his body clad with the regal gown, on his head he affixed a huge conical tin-pudding frame, fresh scowered; around the summit of which was strapped the collar with many bells, that was wont

to compass the sleek neck of the countess dowager's lap-dog. In his dexter he held a coiled up paper, indeed the identical one containing the wonder working project, which he had snatched out of the orator's pocket, as the latter, hastily passing him, was making towards his lady, and his left hand was affectedly stuck in his bosom. The baronet's long sallow face, large black eyes and coarse features, stared so ruefully and so comically under his fool's cap, that it was impossible to withhold the tribute of laughter he expected from the exhibition. He now indulged the spectators' and his own propensity with a variety of antics, nods, contortions, grimaces and quaint sounds: Punch himself could not have better performed. These being only intended as a prelude to the farce, he now unrolled the precious

document, and, in a voice similar in tones to those of the droll gentleman last named, proceeded to impart as much of its contents as he could himself peruse: but short was his progress therein. The honorable writer unhappily was one of those geniusses, who flatter themselves that the valuable matter they commit to paper, needs not the ornament of fair inditing. His characters became in consequence downright hieroglyphics to the eye of an unskilful decypherer.

The baronet, to use an expression of one present, “boggled most confoundedly,” and the laugh, which at first had been for the exhibitor, was now turned against him, intermixed with hissings and hootings and cries of—

Away with him.—To school—to his horn book—Off—*Off*ham off.

Sir Henry awhile withstood the storm; but at length his patience giving way, he threw his fool's cap into the midst of his tormentors, exclaiming. — “ Here, I bequeath this amongst ye. Get each one made after the same ashion—then ye'll be all fitted.”

This ebullition of folly over, they crowded round Domville, requesting him to impart to them the contents of his paper: but our Dreamer was by this time awake, or nearly so; and sobered by the buffoonery just witnessed, faint were the hopes he entertained of his intended coadjutors. He now viewed his plan with nearly as much indifference as if it had been the conception of another: nevertheless he complied and this was the substance.

For the five days that remained to be

got over till the shooting season should begin, it proposed the adoption of bodily sports to the exclusion of sedentary games. This first clause was only intended as a probationary ordeal, the strict compliance with which alone could qualify any candidate for admission into the newly instituted order, to be called *The Tenters*, or *Knights of the Tent*; because, during the fortnight that the exercise of grouse shooting was to last, the only canopy allowed betwixt them and the sky would be a *tent*. It was presumed that under such a covering, pitched in the very centre of the area, intended for their daily, laborious, sports, and in which spot little more than the bare necessities of life could well be gathered, a habit of early rising and hardihood would be contracted, and the knights gradually weaned from those in-

dulgencies that tend to debilitate the frame. It was moreover declared that the scope and tendency of the association was not only to qualify its members for sportsmen ; but to enable sportsmen to become real soldiers, inured before hand to the privations and hardships incident to a military life.—Then followed a variety of well-digested regulations for the well-being of the society, with penalties attached to the infraction of each.

The whole concluded with an address to the countess dowager and her two daughters, requesting the former to honor the infant institution so far, as to become its Lady Patroness: the two ladies were besought to give it also their sanction, by permitting each knight to wear their favorite colours entwined, and by selecting a suitable dress, as a uniform for the corps,

during the whole time of its being upon duty.

Such were the feeble means by which our Projector had hoped to achieve an alteration in the rooted dispositions of a score of thoughtless young men, with a view that their example might influence numbers of their rank and, in time, effect a reform, where a reform is certainly most wanted.

Beings all corporeal, such as your plodding men of business, hold, I know, in utter contempt the gay creations of the lively and fanciful. The poet's pathos and harmonious numbers never reach their heart nor even affect their ears. These sticklers for mere matters of fact in their gloomy wisdom have no conception of intellectual enjoyments, and, like the oyster,

they contract the universe within the limits of their own shells.

But the Writer of these pages is himself too great a dreamer, not to make common cause with his Hero in this instance. Truth compels him to acknowledge that the main business of his whole life has hitherto been a series of visionary projects without having yet made one step towards either fame or fortune. And yet so constantly infatuated is he with his delusions, that it is only at the birth of a fresh scheme, he begins to wonder at the miscarriage of the former one.—Well, be it so — since the joys he derives from expectation greatly exceed the bitterness of disappointment, he hopes to dream on to the end of the chapter.

Mr. Domville's plan, however, met with

a better reception than he had anticipated; it contained two ingredients, each sufficient to ensure a temporary adoption—**NOVELTY** and **NOTORIETY**—So the party broke up, each individual determined to go to the probation in such a manner, as to intitle him to an admission into the noble order of the *Tenters*.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS.

PIERCEFILD Castle was now the scene of additional bustle ; the ladies had full range for the display of their taste. Indeed a no less weighty employment fell to their share than that of selecting such a dress for the intended knights, as should indicate both the sportsman and the militaire, the gentleman with the man of fashion : close yet *degagé*, spruce and elegant ; neither plain nor showy, but tasteful, genteel, and befitting their rank.

The consultation was deep and protracted.

A man and horse had been dispatched after the tailor of the family, reckoning that by the time of his arrival the selection would be made. The tailor found them still debating on the subject, and, indeed, it afforded sufficient scope to exercise the ingenuity of a whole divan of female heads.

Let us enumerate some of the momentous topics under discussion.

First, the *upper covering* — after what fashion or cut should it be made up : whether coat — frock — or jacket ; with or without trimmings, — with or without facings, — straight or lapelled, — high or low collared, — and chiefly of what colour — whether of one or more.

Next the under garment y'clept *waist-*

coat,—whether of satin, kerseymere or marcella.—straight, striped or zigzagged. — Whether double or single breasted,—high or low pocketed,—color, of course, to match. Then came the *nether covering*,—whether inexpressibles or pantaloons should be adopted,—of what materials these and how worked,—whether plain or embroidered,—to hang loose or set close. Merciful Heaven! after they had discussed these knotty points, (settled they could not) besides the addenda of hose, leggings or gaiters,—nay, down to the very shoes, there remained an article of no less importance than the shape, form or figure of the *hat*,—whether round or cocked,—with or without cockade,—whether high or low crowned,—narrow or broad brimmed,—well plumed or featherless,—with gold or silver lace, or tassels, or without either

A quarto volume could not contain the multitudinous remarks that were urged on this single topic.

Several ladies dropping in, they were appealed to and their appeal led to fresh discussions; or rather they, like Milton's Chaos, by their decision the more embroiled the subject.—At length the knight, I mean him of the thimble, who stood aloof at a respectful distance, ventured on a nearer approximation in the most obsequious manner. In order to secure favour for his boldness, and engage the attention of the fair debators he spread out, at full length, his card of patterns. This display of gay colours of every hue caught every eye, and, for a time, put an end to the consultation. The witchery it operated was such, that honest *Snip*, who had hitherto been viewed as a remote

planet of an inferior system, became at once the centre of attraction.

This man was a clever contriver; in other words knew how to promote his interest by all the art and cunning of the fraternity. Being appealed to for his opinion respecting cloth, colour and cut, he gave it so cautiously, assented or dissented in so qualified a manner, listened to objections with so attentive a deference, re-appealed in his turn so insinuatingly, with a voice softened down almost to a whisper, and with such a pliability of attitudes, that, by degrees, he inclined a majority of the suffrages in favour of his purpose, and finally contrived to obtain an order for the precise cloth he had most to dispose of, and for those other articles he could more easily procure. He departed, boldly promising to have the clothes made

up and delivered within a time, less by one half, than he knew it was practicable for him to accomplish the task.

The tailor dismissed, the hatter, who had been long in attendance, was now admitted in. This man proved a fool, and thus he betrayed his folly: Lady Clementina, who had seen a Spanish dress at some masquerade, had become in particular enamoured with the hat and its appendages: it looked so smart, so genteel, so natty, so spruce, bespeaking both the gallant man and the cavalier. She now undertook to make the fellow sensible of its form, by telling him that the hat was neither round nor cocked; but only one side of the brim turned up, and so secured by means of a gold button and loop, with a white ostrich feather waving above. Master Woolly listened with

all the wisdom a stupid face could assume, but when she added that all the hats, twenty-one in number, must be produced in five days; the hatter, as timorous in making promises as the tailor was daring in breaking them, lifted up his hands in piteous intreaty, protesting that it would nearly take that space of time to provide himself with a *block* for the purpose.

That unlucky word was his condemnation. “In that case, my good fellow, keep the block as a substitute for your head, and you will then have *what you are*.—You may leave the room.”

The loss of so profitable a job made him smartly feel the whole extent of his disgrace; his clenched fist was dispatched upwards to punish the offending cause.—It now appeared that the substitution had

been made, for his knuckles were worsted in the encounter.

Now poured in pieces of cloth intended for the construction of three tents or marquees: whereupon the ladies fell to measuring, the maids to cutting out, and all the sempstresses of the neighbourhood were put in requisition.

While the ladies are thus laudably employed, turn we to the gentlemen.

The whole length of *their* morning, dating from ten till two (a couple of hours in each period earlier than usual) was tolerably well got through with the help of billiards, some gymnastic games and shooting at a mark. The latter recreations were several times renewed and prosecuted with a keenness that might have afforded some hope, had not that keenness been mostly excited by the rage for

betting. As for Mr. Domville, who had suggested the sports, he thought proper to remove his person from the scene.

The truth was that he happened, at that juncture, to be seized with the *furor poetica*: the irresistible impulse brought him within the more retired spot of the park. His resolution was no less than to commemorate in a long poem of unperishable verse, the new project and its future consequences, to be, of course, inscribed to Lady Olivia Piercefield. Upon second thoughts, however, this epopeia he would endeavour to confine within the limits of two cantos; which afterwards was only to find matter for an epistle; and finally he reduced it to a sonnet, which sonnet he contrived to accomplish. Not a little elevated with the production, he hurried to his chamber, in order to write it out

fair and *to see how it looked*. But the next morning, on a re-perusal, he found reason to abate much of the encomium he had bestowed on the lines, and the day after they were thrown by as a *poor thing*. For this reason it shall not be inserted here, as I ought not to suppose the Public less fastidious than its author.

The evening of this day also proved a period of bustle and activity. All the apparatus for a tea party and collation was boated over in vessels, manned by the gentlemen themselves, from the castle to a beautiful temple, erected on an island in the centre of a lake. Thither the ladies and their friends were conveyed by the same means and the same rowers. The interval between the meals was enlivened by boat races. Much gallantry was elicited from the honourable contenders,

spirited on by the fair beholders who were both the awarders and bestowers of the prizes. They strove for victory with as much apparent exertion as if some hundreds of pounds depended upon the issue, and we are not quite sure that some such motive was not the principal incentive. Nor did their gallantry cease at the close of the nautical games. A dance seeming to meet the wishes of the ladies, a chosen number were dispatched to convey over lady Clementina's harp. On their return, each gentleman, his fair partner in hand, stood up. The hearts of both sexes beat high in expectation of a pleasure that was so soon to be realized. The harp struck up a lively tune, and their feet, in sprightly mazes, moved in unison with the animating sounds.

It was one of those treats that are

relished with the greater zest for being enjoyed on the moment of its proposal. For often the mind, wearied in the contemplation of a promised indulgence, becomes languid when the hour for its gratification is arrived.

The last rays of the setting sun beheld the dance going on with unabated spirit, and the moon shone high in the heavens before it was relinquished.

On their stepping into the boats to effect their return, the night was so beautifully serene, the vast expanse of waters, fringed all round with a rich variety of foliage, appeared so lovely, so novel to their sight, in its present moony aspect, that, in order to prolong the contemplation of the scenery, they were several times rowed round the lake.

The animation excited by the dance

gently subsided, all harsher feelings were hushed, and the mind reposing, as it were, on the tranquil bosom of nature, felt sensations so refreshing, so benign, so religious, so philanthropic, that one of the party, and he not the least callous, and an epicure to boot, was heard to exclaim:—

“ Oh, what a luxury I have hitherto missed.”

The pleasure they had derived from this extempore ball was too keenly felt not to wish for a repetition. My lord Piercefield who, in consonance with the amplitude of his means, did every thing upon a grand scale, issued cards of invitation to all the nobility and gentry, residing within an extensive circuit of his mansion. In addition to this, Domville's suggestion, first hinted to lady Olivia and warmly taken up by her ladyship, prevailed. The invitation

in consequence also reached the principal tenants of his lordship, and, through them, the more respectable part of their neighbours, amongst the former, farmer Stubble, his dame and blooming family were of course included.

O the influence of French names, when timely sounding on congenial ears! Lady Olivia was listening to her admirer's remark with a sort of playful indifference, more intent upon displaying the turns of her pretty neck, than upon reaping any benefit from his remark; when, in conclusion, he happened to say that the entertainment would then become what the French term—*La fête du chateau*.—Instantaneous was the effect of these magical words.

“It shall be done, cried she, rising. I'll go to my brother this very instant, and

give orders for the necessary arrangements."

Thus were the parties concerned indebted to her successful application for additional pleasure, and that more widely diffused. Although short was the notice given, (the day appointed for the shooting expedition being too near at hand to allow a greater latitude) numerous and diversified was the party assembled on the time fixed for their appearance. But the entertainment derived by the various ranks was by no means proportionate to their respective consequence; in this, as in all other treats, the greater share of enjoyment fell to the less fastidious. It is true that the ostentatious had full scope to display his grandeur, the wealthy his acquisitions, the ladies their finery, the sarcastic to vent his

malignity, and the quizzer to introduce his substitute for wit. But enjoyment, much less embittered and more lasting, the good natured part of the fashionable groups derived from their condescension and urbanity; for the pleasure given is generally returned with usury to the bestowers.

The awe and restraint to which the tenantry were at first subjected, gradually wore off.—They laughed,—they quaffed,—they feasted,—they caroused; but most of them preferred the steward's hospitality to the grand banquetting room. Their ruddy complexioned daughters too! how the eye wandered over the costly furniture of the apartments; with what delight they beheld and admired the elegant, the splendid dresses of the ladies—their own, alas, how inferior! How cordially they gave themselves up to the exhilarating spirit of

the dance! How trilling was the touch, perhaps the squeeze of some first-rate beau. I beg his pardon — *Exquisite**.— True it was that, when comparing their lowliness with such altitudes, they felt the sting of envy, and that rivalry and disappointment now and then marred their pleasures; but still they pursued the recreation with keener relish and more lastingly, and morning broke in upon them before the thoughts of giving over ever occurred to their minds. At length they departed, and then such an alteration took place in the respective situations of these returning parties, that the ladies were generally obliged to lead home the gentlemen who had escorted them thither.

* The learned Antiquarian is requested to ascertain whether that fashionable expression, already growing obsolete, can be used, without an anachronism, so far back as the year 1810.

CHAPTER VII.

A GRAND ATTEMPT.

AT length the great the important day arrived, when, according to the previous conception of Mr. Domville, the first step was to be made that would ultimately lead to the consummation so devoutly to be wished, namely, the improvement, both moral and physical, of the higher classes; the effects of which would, of course, be beneficially felt by the lowest cottager in the realm,

A couple of waggons had started before dawn and conveyed with the tents every

other requisite. A few hours after, the courteous knights with mighty bustle, in high glee and in spruce attire, being all mustered, took their ceremonious leave of the ladies of Piercefield castle and sallied out upon their adventurous expedition.

According to the regulations laid down, it was enjoined that every member of the society should become, as much as possible, his own helper ; in consequence one servant only was allowed for five knights. Thus attended, forth they proceeded in regular order two by two, each Cavalier carrying his own fowling-piece and ammunition, the servants bringing up the rear.

As the tailor had failed in providing them with the uniform dress according to his promise (possibly he may have been, just then, compulsively employed in the

furnishing of a large funeral,) they were fain to equip themselves in the sporting jackets they had previously provided for the occasion. These jackets of various colours, all gay and even splendid, attracted the sight and excited the curiosity of every one they met. The labour of the hind and the tittle-tattle of the gossip were suspended: beldames bending under their burdens of stolen sticks, now unheeding the danger of detection, tarried on the road agape, till their sight failed them; and the procession, as it passed, collected the whole population of every hamlet. At first, the novelty of their situation, the buoyancy of youth, and the bracing effects of the morning air, kept them in good humour; and jokes passing to and fro excited their merriment: but the ride was long, and its *tedium* unrelieved by any

droll incident, they in consequence soon began to feel weary and discontented.

Thus on they journeyed, staring and stared at—now finding the sun confoundedly hot, or the breeze cursed cold, or the roads devilishly broken, or their gouns plaguily heavy, or their saddles damnably hard; and as they ascended the more elevated regions, the keenness of the air excited a corresponding keenness of appetite; which, alas, they had not for the present any means of gratifying, and they stared at each other in utter astonishment, at having for *once* missed a meal.

In that emergency they halted for the purpose of holding a consultation. Mr. Domyville being naturally applied to as the original contriver of the expedition, lamented that he had omitted to provide the

party with *sumpter mules*, as practised in days of yore.

“Damn the mules,” cried Sir Henry Offham, “a jack ass with a brace of well stored panniers would have answered the purpose well enough; but not one of us has had the good sense to be his own jack ass except myself: in proof of which here is my provender.”

So saying, he pulled out a liberal allowance of cold tongue and a proportionate quantum of bread. — “Now, Gentlemen, in me behold the Performer, as Spectators, nothing will I charge ye for the exhibition.” But finding by their urgency to become sharers, they were likely to annoy him in his masticating performance, he looked about him, espied a convenient spot, leaped from his steed, ran up a stiff accli-

vity, and reaching a projecting rock that overhung the road, down he squatted himself, while the gaping hungry cavalcade formed a semi-circle beneath. Sir Henry without loss of time fell unmercifully upon his stores, every fragment of which he devoured, unheeding the taunts, mutterings, and curses, that

Innocuous yet sonorous were, from empty mouths,
Growl'd forth below.

Never did grim Hunger catch the gentlemen in such a situation before.

From a limpid spring he quaffed wherewith to slake his thirst, a gratification the other knights were debarred from, as they had not stowed within themselves any provocatives that called for such a supply. However, a hamlet they soon after reached, afforded them that sort of homely fare they

hardly knew of but by accidental hearsay. Though the baronet's provender was a luxury compared with their present food, such a havock did they commit on the cottager's stores, that these found themselves in the same state of dearth, as a small island in the West Indian Archipelago is reduced to, after a visit from a fleet of twenty British men of war.

Towards evening, harassed and way-worn, they reached the place of their destination: and soon after they were cheered by the sight of the waggons, that had taken a more circuitous road in order to gain the same spot. The knights would gladly have fallen at once on their evening repast; but labour and time were requisite before the tents could be unpacked, and before their alimentary stores could be disencumbered from other luggage, every

one was called upon to help. At length, by dint of great, and to them unusual exertions, prolonged as these were by their own inexpertness, the tents were pitched, accommodations within and the requisites for a good substantial repast placed before them. This being enjoyed in full, CARDS!—No, sleep was the next call, and so sound was their repose, that the privations and fatigues of the day were for many successive hours quite buried in oblivion.

It were not difficult however to predict that, of an assemblage composed of the afore described materials, the component parts would be speedily disunited.—The novelty of their situation, with the pleasure of the sport, held them together for two or three days; the shame of betraying a lack of *bottom* spirited them on to the con-

clusion of the fourth; but on the fifth, tones of dissatisfaction, followed by complaints and murmurs, broke forth against the unlucky promoter of the expedition, who, fortunately for himself, happened to be absent at that juncture. They cursed and damned him in round set terms, for a visionary projector, and called themselves so many fools, for suffering their wisdom to be led astray by his folly. Without beat of drum, sound of trumpet, or any other military notification, they would have forthwith ridden back to the castle, had not one of the party, more provident than the rest, attracted their attention by producing and unpacking two and fifty layers of neat paste-board, all of equal dimensions and of an oblong form; white, smooth and plain on the outside, but the insides of some were

party coloured, red or black, those of others richly emblazoned with various cuts of every gay hue. This plaything for full grown babies, bears in its aggregate, the name of—a *Pack of Cards*.

The success of so glaring an infraction of the established rules induced Sir Henry Offham to cry out, “ *I can match that.*”

In proof of which, within rattled and out rolled, from a hollow, ligneous cylinder, three small, cubicular, osseous, white, substances, similarly dotted with black round cavities, from one to six, inclusive, denoting the number of its faces. This time-killing instrument bears the name of *Die* in the singular, but in the plural is distinguished by the appellation of *Dice*.—*Lexicon*.

Both these were received with an eager-

ness proportionate to their long abstinence from them; and their sojourn on the mountain was in consequence prolonged. But the next day (Sunday) without striking their tents, or even evincing any religious care for their household goods, and though in a most disorderly array, shewing their total relaxation from all discipline, rapidly and safely did the knights contrive to effect their retreat to the castle, their former and more convenient headquarters.

By Adventurers so very spirited it is presumed that more would have been achieved, had their heroical ardour been kept from cooling by the blazing sight of their regimental dress; but unfortunately for the elucidation of that point, the uniforms came on the very day they had departed, with complimentary notes from the ladies,

wishing the gentlemen success in their sports and arduous career, intimating an intention of soon paying them a visit, and hoping at the same time they had escaped catching cold.

The clothes were escorted by master Snip in *propria persona*. He arrived in the heat of the day, panting, bustling, and sweltering, his head filled with lying excuses for the delay, his tongue ready to deliver them and his impudent face unable to betray any sense of shame in the delivery. Acute was his regret at their unlooked for departure, and his subsequent vexation much more so. For, after a number of calls on his quondam customers, to induce them to try the clothes in hopes of payment, they did not even allow him a chance of displaying their attractions, but with a view to elicit some fun out of

this knight of the shears, consigned him over to the merciless baronet, who dispatched him to a variety of places for payment, where no payment was to be had; and the well sealed epistolary dispatches of so incensing a nature, as to subject the bearer to a caning or horse-whipping. At length, poor Snip, finding out that they were only hoaxing him, was obliged to put up with the loss of time, the whole of his profit, and with a considerable part of the prime cost. An awful and, we hope, a deterring warning to such gentry, against their too common practice of extending their promises beyond the possibility of their performance. It is true, honest Woolly, the hatter, gained nothing for his blunt declaration excepting, what he gave himself—a knock on the pate—but this rascally tailor was very properly

punished, in a manner more acute than bodily castigation could inflict, for having thus wantonly sported, in a matter of such infinite importance, with the sacred majesty of truth.

Thus terminated this silly expedition, the only permanent result of which was, in due time, commemorated in the rate-books of the surrounding parishes, entry being therein made of an increase of population to be hereafter maintained at the expence of said parishes, owing to the frailty of sundry damsels, which frailty, to judge by the coinciding time of their accouchment, must have been accelerated by their lordship's incontinency.

It remains for us, however, to record the very characteristic manner in which the penalties that were at first enforced for the infringement of regulations were

disposed of : it amounted to a pretty large sum. Domville proposed to bestow the money on some charitable institution ; Piercefield wanted to make it the prize of some race or shooting match ; a steady worshipper of the blind goddess was for committing the award to Dame Fortune through the medium of a lottery ; but the generality of suffrages was decidedly in favour of a *boxing match*. In consequence, a couple of countrymen, endued with more strength than brains, agreed to maul each other for the sum and the spectator's diversion. What diversion was obtained, let those who beheld the fight declare ; but the consequences to the combatants can be soon told. — The vanquished did not long survive his defeat, the conqueror elated with his wealth forsook his former occupation, took to hard drinking and

was shortly after laid in the same church-yard, side by side with his unsuccessful opponent, as the inscription on the tombstone, placed over his grave, records to the present day, in these elegant and mellifluous lines.

Greg Scroggins pitch'd for cash 'gainst Gawler Dick,
To church-yard sent him, thump'd all o'er;
Then Scroggins drank the tap dry, then fell sick :
To Gawler now he lies next door.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN ADVENTURE.

BUT other scenes are now opening for Domville to perform in; from out of other ranks of society he will have different characters to contend with, and the trials that await him will decide his fate, according to the wisdom and fortitude with which he will sustain them.

On the fifth day of the knights' sojourn on Moel y Cynghorion *—read it who can, our Hero, in order to gratify a rambling

* The Hill of the Counsellors.

disposition he had often felt, started early from his tent, for the purpose of exploring the more remote and solitary parts of these wild regions. He rode to a farm house, erected a considerable way within the mountains, and thence proceeded on foot over hill and dale ; but chiefly directing his steps where wildness and abruptness of ascent seemed to forbid the approach of man.

The morning was warm, the air still. About noon, lassitude and excessive heat induced him to look out for some shady, resting place :—that shelter he would have reached in a much more precipitous manner than he intended, had he not luckily cast his eye that way, before he made another step, for he then stood on the verge of a huge, jutting, stone, that overhung a sort of abyss, very irregular in

its circumference of above three hundred yards, and not less than thirty feet deep. He had a bird's eye survey over the extent, and descried in its centre a small pool, the depth of which gave its waters so dark a hue, that Domville hailed it by the name of lake *Avernus*. Not a weed fringed its margin; indeed no signs of vegetation were perceptible within the area, except a few thorny shrubs that grew here and there within the clefts of the surrounding rocks.

Our Adventurer still remained on the brink, struck with the silent gloom of their nether scenery; but the clouds, that had been for some time gathering, began to dissolve, at first in a few very large drops; these as they smote the waters of the lake, gave a disturbed, speckled, aspect to its hitherto smooth, death like placidity; and when gusts of wind pressed on its surface,

it curled up in angry waves, like a grin on the midnight ruffian's countenance.

Such was the repulsive aspect of this gloomy recess, that Domville, a solitary being on the whole extent of the mountainous waste, and exposed to the sudden burst of the storm, collected over his head, hesitated to accept the shelter afforded under its projecting rocks. His resolve was determined by a gust of wind which blew off his hat ; it fell into the lake below. The privation of that covering was now too keenly felt, not to endeavour its recovery at some risk : he stepped into a ravine or deep channel, by which his descent was considerably lessened and, by means of hands, knees and feet, judiciously and carefully placed, he found himself at the bottom, and soon recovered his strayed property.

Domville hastened to discover what shelter the jutting rocks and bushes could afford him. On the west side of the *coomb*, he met with a snug recess just under the wind. Now came the tremendous visitation forth in its full fury. The dark clouds poured their contents on the earth, the wind raged, the lightning flashed and the thunder roared.

Amidst the turmoil of the conflicting elements, Man, who proudly calls himself the *Lord of the creation*, is humbled by the consciousness of his impotence. As in the hour of death, the petty distinctions of rank fade before him. A welcome sharer of his situation he hails his fellow sufferer, whom, at all other times, he would have spurned. Domville had not even that consolation. As he cast an anxious look around, he felt he was alone, and on himself alone must

rely for the care of his being. But from that depression the mind by degrees recovers its loftiness. In watching the progress and declension of the storm, he also marked its desolation with a firmer eye. Even a proud satisfaction is derived by daring to contemplate, with a heart, though dismayed, yet unsubdued, the sublime grandeur of the conflict. It was one of those thunder storms, whose rage is in an inverse proportion to its short duration, and the small extent prescribed to its ravages. Nature had collected its destroying energies to hurl them with greater effect on one devoted spot. The earth smoked as the rain struck upon it, the wind with sudden gusts forced in the cavities of the rocks, or raging unimpeded in its career, hissed, roared, or howled, or mournfully sighed, as apparently spent, it

gave a momentary pause:—the shrubs exposed to the blast, were dashed against the rocks and, recovering, indignant shook off the feculent drops from their shattered foliage. With soul appalling vividness the flashing lightning glared in the dark sky, and the rattling peals of thunder, reverberating in quick succession from hill to hill, might well be supposed the executing ministers of an offended Deity.

Now the rain waters from the heights around poured into the glen; the turbid streams swelled and discoloured the contents of the lake which overflowed its banks, and, though a vent there was for their emission, the torrents that continued to flow nearly deluged the whole level of the enclosure.

When the rain had abated, Domville left his station, endeavouring to find a way out

of the glen. The only outlet discoverable was a rough, winding, passage that parted the rocks, but so narrow, that in its tortuosities he found his progress often impeded.

Within an angle of this passage a low, rudely-shaped, door struck his sight. Astonished at the unexpected discovery, some time elapsed ere he called out: but hearing no answering voice he tried the door. It was much decayed, and as he pressed his strength against it, a staple fixed inside gave way, and a room of a low diminutive size, coarsely hewn out of the rock, appeared before him: a broken table and chair with a truckle bed, its only furniture. After another fruitless attempt at giving notice of his approach, he resolved further to try the adventure, he ventured to turn the knob of a wider door

which easily opened. To his utter astonishment and, as if by enchantment, he beheld, and stepped into an airy, modern apartment, not inelegantly furnished.

A door window facing the south opened into a lawn, and through its panes he beheld a most singular sight.

At the extremity of the lawn, on the very verge of a precipice, stood a man motionless, dressed in a blue uniform faced with red, a regimental cocked hat covered his head, and in his dexter glittered a sword. The storm had partially renewed its fury ; just after a loud clap of thunder, the report of a pistol was heard ; the soldier received the bullet in his breast—he was seen to stagger but fell not ; and now a youth, a meer stripling, brandishing a dagger, another pistol in his belt, rushed

upon him, and struck him several times with his weapon, and then hurled him down the precipice!!!

Hardly was the murderous deed committed, when an elderly man, sheltered by a huge umbrella, having a youthful damsel under his arm, hastened to the spot; the umbrella was committed to the lady's care, and he, holding forth his open arms, the boy rushed into them.

After an effusion of the fondest parental caresses, the party was seen directing their steps to the dwelling, now solely occupied by Mr. Domville who, to tell the truth, was rather in an awkward predicament. Standing within an angle of the room, he anxiously eyed them, awaiting detection, desirous, yet ashamed, of retreating the way he came.

Never was a stronger contrast exhibited

than the appearance and demeanour of the young female with the atrocious deed of which she had been a witness; nor could he ought discover in the youthful perpetrator but what was rather prepossessing than otherwise: but the senior's person—chiefly his fierce, vindictive features accorded but too well with the horrible scene. He was straight, tall, and well proportioned, yet much of the alarm excited by such a figure was lessened by evident marks of age on his frame.

The party was, by this time, close to the glass door, and made their entrance one by one—first the elder who, on perceiving the intruder, retreated a step and with arms extended, stared motionless in silent astonishment; the youth and maiden now appeared within. The youth, the swell of whose features excited by his late exploit

had not yet subsided, as if ready for a second encounter, hastily grasped the pommel of his sword in a very determined and hero-like manner. His sister, for so we will suppose her, as quickly placed her hand upon his arm; thus checking his motion, and the look of female benignity extremely engaging, she gave him, assured the stranger of personal safety.

The father, in the mean time, gave signs of animation by a countenance expressive of alarm, anger and irresolution. His glaring eye ball rolled from Domville to the window, then to the door, then round the apartment, then again was fixed on the stranger, who attempted rather hesitatingly an apology for his appearance, which the other stopped short by crying out in an agitated, broken, manner:—

” *C'est étrange ceci, tres étrange!—Com-*

ment Diable a-t-il pu?—Cet étourdi de Blondin—où est il?—n'est-il pas encore revenu?”

Our Englishman, perceiving they were foreigners, assured the gentleman in French that chance alone had brought him to the spot, that the fierceness of the storm had compelled him to shelter within his dwelling, and now, that the rain had ceased, he would take his leave.

“*Ecoutez, Monsieur,*” said the foreigner, stepping up to him with an anxious trepidation in his voice and manner. “*Y a-t-il long-tems que vous etes ici?*”

“Hardly a minute,” was the reply with some violation of truth.

This assurance gave some satisfaction, and in order to increase it, Domville added that he had been almost the whole time stationed in the back room, through

which he gained admittance and which he had but just left.

“ *Si cela est, vous n’avez donc rien vu ?* ”

Here he stopped and looked as if he wished to recal the question, as it might lead him to betray his secret. The Englishman, perceiving his embarrassment, thought it more prudent to remove the cause by calmly saying : “ that the room was too dark for him to distinguish any object.”

Though all suspicion was not yet dispelled, and though a longer stay still subjected him to personal danger (for the young man’s unloaded pistol remained yet in his belt) he could not prevail upon himself to make his parting bow ; but detained by curiosity, or perhaps by another motive, tarried a little longer and, professing himself a stranger in these parts, enquired the shortest way for David

Morgan's farm.—The old gentleman could give him no information on that head. Blondin — his man Blondin could tell. But Blondin was absent.

Here the young lady interfered, and with a voice the influence of which no heart could resist, and an earnestness of manner to set him right on his track, lest any harm should betide him, partly in broken English and partly in good French, delivered her directions.

Her speech had ended, yet some moments elapsed ere Domville, recovering himself, returned her thanks in his most graceful manner, which thanks were as gracefully received; then bowing to the senior and not forgetting the weaponed youth, for whom, notwithstanding his sister's superior attractions, and spite of the deed he had just witnessed, he could not

help feeling a lively interest, he in good earnest took his leave.

The track indicated to him went across the lawn : he longed to step aside towards the precipice, that he might have another view of the murdered individual ; but forbore, aware that his every motion was narrowly watched. So he pursued his journey, his mind intent upon the recollection of the late event, endeavouring to account for the singular transaction, and to frame for himself a proper line of conduct.

A considerable time elapsed before he reached the hospitable farmer's dwelling, upon whose stores he made ample amends for so long and so arduous a fasting. The call of hunger silenced, he cautiously interrogated his host respecting the strange inhabitant of the glen, but scanty was

the information obtained; all he could collect was, that an outlandish family had arrived in these parts, about the beginning of spring, and had taken up their residence in the dwelling in the rock, known by the name of the *Hermit's Cave*; but greatly enlarged since the time it was occupied by the Anchorite: that the servant often called at the farm for provisions, which he paid for as he obtained them; but as he did not pry into his concerns, honest David thought it unmannerly to be inquisitive about theirs.

Domville had some thoughts of imparting all he knew of the transaction to a magistrate; but desisted on a surmise which, as he reconsidered the subject, bordered upon a certainty: namely, that this supposed murdered man was only the *effigy* of one. He at all events determined on visiting the

Coomb next day, ere he took further steps in this mysterious affair; with this intent he took up his night's lodging at the farm, instead of returning to his tented companions. The same conjectures still pursued him in bed, and weary as he was from the effects of his pedestrian excursion, they kept him long awake.

Thus he reasoned with himself:

If shooting at a mark was the sole motive, surely the midst of a storm was a strange time chosen for the sport; what sport besides could result from murdering the object? That this was a lifeless object must be obvious. No human being, having the free use of his limbs, would stand motionless, like a target, to be shot at and then stabbed. On the other hand, the old gentleman's agitation and his

anxiety for concealment betrayed other sensations than those that would be excited, by being detected in an innocent recreation. But again, *per contra*, it was *morally* impossible that the beautiful young foreigner could hold kindred with murderers; and yet she bore a striking family likeness with the youth, which likeness could even be traced in the elder. The recollection of this lovely Angel (for so he rapturously called her) brought before him as in a vision, her figure, her dress, her voice, her gait—all was rehearsed. On that subject he dwelt till exhausted nature closed his eye-lids late in the night; in consequence the morning was far advanced towards noon, ere he departed for the glen.

Had he set out as early as he intended,

he would have caught the family in the bustle or act of departure; but when he reached the spot, the dwelling only remained, carefully locked up and fastened inside; and the staple which he had forced out replaced with additional securities. He then repaired to the precipice down which he had seen the soldier hurled. Nought could he trace except the remnants of a late fire; the ashes were still warm, and the blaze was further attested by some loose straw and fragments of half burnt sticks.

Thus baffled in all his attempts to come at the truth of this singular transaction, and perceiving no sign of habitation near, he was induced to retrace his steps to the farm and thence to the camp, which he reached a few hours after his com-

panions had forsaken it, on their return to Piercefield castle, whither he followed them, not a little indignant at their so soon relinquishing an expedition, from which such mighty results were expected.

CHAPTER IX.

A PORTRAIT.

DOMVILLE had the good sense to forbear imparting to any of his present companions the event recorded in the last chapter; there was too little congeniality of mind between him and such mere sensualists, the love of pleasure the only cement; that being removed, the remainder was easily severed. Indeed the whole party, a few days after, dispersed themselves in various directions, in quest of that pleasure they easily found but

scantly enjoyed. Thus Piercefield castle from a thronged mansion became again a solitude.

But ere we dismiss for some time, perhaps for ever, the late inhabitants of the Coomb, the Reader, we presume, will not be sorry to peruse Domville's description of the lovely stranger, recorded in a letter thus indited to an intimate acquaintance.

DEAR LANGLEY,
After having heard my account of the mysterious sight I beheld in North Wales, you particularly wish for a circumstantial description of *la belle Française*, and say you will not rest till you have obtained it from me. I feel no difficulty in obliging you. Take then, as it comes, what

both my memory and my heart suggest.

“ As she approached the house, the cast of her countenance struck me forcibly: the impression more owing to mind than beauty. I thought her interesting, but not beautiful then: the effect of her charms was lessened by an ample shawl and other sheltering apparel. But her features seemed to express distinctively, though still with the mildness of resignation, a disapproval of the savage scene she had been compelled (I suppose) to witness. I fancied I could further discern what I have not yet met with—an elevation of mind under the most attractive, female, gentleness.

“ But when she appeared before me not four yards apart; her face as handsome as we can conceive nature to form it,—when with the umbrella she laid aside the cover-

ing that concealed her neck and the most beautiful fall of shoulders ever beheld, many beauties of both, though still curtained by a triple row of frill were visible, when her elegant form and upright figure, with such symmetry as we would ascribe to Venus, were displayed before my ravished senses, I felt all their loveliness—all their witchery.—I owned the presence of real beauty, and could have worshipped it.—Wish you for a more particular account? I will endeavour to gratify your wish.

Her age does not, I believe, exceed sixteen; yet some indications would induce one to think her older.—Her dress, the color of which I forget or never knew, though not quite fashionable, was highly becoming, because it *fitted her* shape; it seemed somehow to denote purity of mind as well as cleanliness of person:—her profuse light

brown hair was gracefully turbaned round her head, the tumber of natural ringlets showing its soft suppleness:—her complexion fair, although a faint tinge from a more southern climate might be traced upon it:—her forehead rather large than otherwise, and exactly of that shape which your cranialogists describe as indicative of sense; that and the expressive brilliancy of her dark brown eyes, together with the bold arch of her brows, would proclaim majesty and even imperiousness, were they not tempered by her sweet pretty mouth, her moist coral lips, (somewhat parted)—her dimpled cheeks—all denoting gentleness, benevolence and benignity.—The nose, that feature which often mars the effect of an otherwise handsome countenance, blended the two desperate characters of her own, and made one harmonious

whole: From an indentation scarcely perceptible it smoothly rose to a due proportion, reminding me of that of Canova's Venus. The only reason that prevents me from believing he took her's as his model, arises from the suggestion that, had he known this young lady, one feature would not have satisfied him.— She must have sat for the whole figure.

“ There were traces of a melancholy smile still on her lips and, youthful as she is, it is plain that she must have known misfortune, and that she has profited by it.

“ I can describe her neck but by a contradiction in terms. It was so delicately well contoured, that it seemed *artificially* made, yet perfectly *natural* and unaffected in all its motions. I have often admired

Lady Olivia's, yet really—But let us proceed.

“ Her bosom the nascent throne of love, though by the modesty of dress concealed and, though her youth forbade a full development——

Here the honorable writer's too warm colouring requires us to omit some of that part of his narrative.

“ Her arms swelling and tapering to her finger's ends, according to the strictest rules of symmetry, bespoke the same proportion for her other limbs, which were besides made sufficiently apparent by the shape of her pretty foot and ankle. On reading this description, I know you will exclaim with your wonted incredulity.—
“ This paragon is then a perfect beauty.”

Upon my soul I think she is.

“ But the more powerful charm of this lovely creature, that which produced the most striking effect, was the tone of her voice. How its sound bespoke a soul worthy to animate that lovely frame!—How it harmonized with the hearer’s every better sensation,—how it told of a mind fraught with the best attributes of her sex. It was ethereal,—yet it was feminine. My ear yet retains the notes, and my heart will never forget them. The effect was indeed irresistible.—Thus delicious, thus sanctifying, is the influence of *real* beauty, when it respects itself.—It purifies the very desires it excites.

“ Let a materialist but behold her person and hear her voice, he must allow that thought is not matter, recant his former doctrine and become a convert to spiritualism.

“ From the warmth of my expressions you will doubtless conclude that I am over head and ears in love and, of course, reft of my right senses: and your conclusion will be erroneous. Love at first sight I always did deride as a false notion.—The heart may be moved, nay, strongly excited, during a short interview; but a further intercourse with the object is indispensable for the existence of real love. As well assert that seed by merely *touching* the soil will grow up a plant. Indeed I have now proved to conviction, that if any mortal could have performed that prodigy, it must have been the lovely stranger: and, as her charms have failed on a heart so susceptible as mine of female beauty, I conclude the thing impossible.—I finally conclude, remaining your’s, &c.

This missive had been given in charge to the footman; it was however recalled for the insertion of the important information contained in the subjoined *Post Scriptum*.

“ I re-open this letter to say that I have been endeavouring to ascertain, whether her face is round or oval – I am rather inclined to think the latter.”

CHAPTER X.

DEBITS AND CREDITS.

SORRY are we that Mr. Domville is compelled to descend from such visionary altitudes to particulars much more personal, and those of daily occurrence. It behoves him to ascertain the amount of his present stock of cash, whence can further supplies be derived, and how in other people's books (for he, good easy man, kept no such register) he stands in

the double character of debtor and creditor. These particulars, but slightly mentioned in novels, are among the most momentous transactions in real life, and so will our Hero find them. In one instance his conduct had been most unfashionable; he had hitherto contrived to discharge his debts, therefore few were the outstanding ones. As for his credits, with the exception of some gambling claims of a very precarious payment, he could not muster up any. The money in hand was not inconsiderable, but the sources whence he drew his supplies threatened suddenly to become dried up. To account for this lamentable state of pecuniary affairs in the son of a wealthy British nobleman, of habits not very expensive, is the chief purpose of the present chapter.

It must be recollected that his mother brought no accession of wealth to the family, that his father's relations entirely disregarded him, and that the viscount dying intestate, the whole landed property devolved on his brother, with whom he was now on terms of sworn foeship. A dissolution of parliament was shortly to take place; for the seat he held, being his brother's property, he had not any chance of re-election. His friend Piercefield, it is true, had promised him adequate indemnification by means of one of his own boroughs; but an unfortunate circumstance is impending, sufficient to cool the ardour of a friendship much warmer than any in the power of that nobleman to feel.

Some years back, Mr. Domville had for a distant relation, by the mother's side, a

West Indian planter who had realized a considerable property. The old gentleman's pride was so much gratified in being allied to one, to whose name the word *Honourable* was prefixed; and in the few visits paid to him, so completely won by the blandishments of his manners, that our Hero, on his demise, found himself the sole executor and legatee of property amounting to upwards of £40,000, to the utter and unjust exclusion of the planter's nephew, against whom no serious charge could be substantiated. It was latterly with the means of this property, curtailed however of two thousand pounds, which sum Mr. Domville had presented to the disinherited nephew, that our Hero kept up the figure which gave him a passport into the higher circles. But on his arrival in town from Piercefield castle, he

received a letter of very unpleasant contents penned by his solicitor ; the purport was, that a law-suit had been instituted against him as heir of the planter, in order to recover the sum of £30,000 with interest.

About ten years back the old gentleman had consented to become sole trustee to a minor, whose property was to that amount. This property had been, with the best intentions, placed in a concern deemed perfectly secure. However, by a series of misfortunes in the extensive trading speculations of the firm, the Gazette had to record its failure. Domville, as sole inheritor of the trustee, was called upon to refund the property thus lost, or abide the event of a law-suit. Any fears he entertained as to the result were dispelled by the assurance of his legal

counsellor, who asserted that the adverse party had not *a leg to stand upon*.

It were to be wished in affairs of this importance that the learned gentlemen of the long robe would entirely discard metaphorical language and express themselves with legal precision. It happened, however, that the plaintiff contrived to stand *firm* upon *both* his legs, and the defendant was left of his own; a verdict to the full amount being given in favour of the former. Mr. Domville became in consequence a *ruined man*, as the world emphatically calls it; and the more so, as relying on the assurance of his legal adviser, he had not provided by any retrenchment for the worst that might happen.

Although I have in the extent of a couple of pages dispatched the causes and

result of this trial, three years elapsed before its final conclusion ; yet, even while it was pending, the young man could not but remark in his friend Piercefield, unusual reserve and distance ; indeed, amongst by far the majority of his companions it was deemed advisable to *cut* Mr. Domville's acquaintance. He had, in his turn, determined to forbear his visits to the fair lady Olivia, most heroically bent upon resigning her hand, rather than she should unite her destiny with one, now in point of fortune so greatly below her expectations. The lady seemed to view the subject in the same light, and to convince him how consonant their sentiments were on that subject, she, after a short siege, surrendered herself in matrimonial bands to a colonel of the Guards.

CHAPTER XI.

A TRANSFER OF PROPERTY.

WHAT will become of our Hero in his present straitened circumstances? He must now discard the luxuries, the pleasures, the *occupations*, the attendants and all the trappings of fashionable life; they are deemed absolutely *indispensible* requisites: how then can he exist without them? Yet he will soon find with what ease the stern decrees of necessity renders feasible the *impossibilities*, conjured up by the prosperous for their own annoyance.

Three ways lay before him.—First, to live as long as he could upon his remnant of credit; self expatriation or a prison the closing scene.—Secondly, to throw himself upon the commiseration of friends and relatives, and thus live in idleness upon the cold pittance of charity;—or, lastly, to provide for his maintenance by his own efforts, securing thereby the salubrious independance both of body and mind. Had he made any other selection than the latter, his present historian would have chosen a worthier subject for his pen.

But indecision and dilatoriness, backed by a consciousness of present cash, kept him long inert, idly expecting that chance would throw in his way those means, almost ever more solidly procured by individual exertions. True it is, that many offers

of friendship were at first tendered, and some actually performed, yet the contents of his purse became more and more reduced; and, though he had gradually weaned himself from his expensive habits, some time must elapse before true economy can be well practised. Yet how shall I relate his gradual descent from luxury to penury! his places of resort declining from mansions to hotels—to taverns—thence to coffee-houses; at length, Lord help us! to a chop-house—and lower still, perhaps, down into a cellar!

It was high time that something should be done.

“Poh,” said he to himself, one morning, in a tone of bravado, “nothing easier. I am well known to possess some literary talent; surely my poetical genius has not departed with my equipage. At all events

I have already by me an abundance of small pieces; a selection will be soon made; any publisher will give me a round sum for the copy-right.—I'll set about it directly."

So saying, he bestirred himself, collected together as much as with the modern art of expanding a little over a wide compass, would make up a neat volume duodecimo, sent the manuscript to a dashing publisher and, with his compliments, apprising him that he would call to-morrow for his opinion of the work.

On his waiting on this *Accoucheur des Muses*, he was received in the most respectful, obsequious, manner. The man was in raptures at the beauties, the many striking beauties of the performance.

"It will be sure to sell; it will go off

rapidly.—It cannot fail of running through several editions.”

The pleasure our Poet felt at these praises so liberally bestowed was considerably damped, when by entering into details, it appeared evident that the encomiast had not even perused the manuscript. In other respects his conduct as a dealer and chapman was very singular.—To expose faults and conceal beauties being, it is well known, the general practice of purchasers.

“ Well, Mr. Margin, as I gave you the first offer in the disposal of these pieces, what is the sum you can afford for them ? ”

This home-put question somewhat staggered the bookseller, he stammeringly replied :

“ Why, as to that, Sir—to be sure, Sir, some price must be set on the poems—

but then it would be found, I fear, inadequate to their value. I thought, Sir,—I thought—But I suppose it was a mistake of mine.”

“What do you mean?”

“I thought, Sir, you wished an expensive edition made at your own cost, for the gratification of your many noble friends; in that case I should be happy in the honour—”

“By no means, nothing further from my thoughts, I assure you. My noble friends, as you call them, must purchase copies if they wish any.”

“True, Sir, true; it is very fitting they should. Well then, Sir, suppose, Sir, suppose we contrive it differently.—Hem—What say you to my undertaking the printing, publishing, advertising of the same, and after those charges are reim-

bursed from the sale, suppose we equally divide the profits."

"That may be fair enough for aught I know to the contrary; but the misfortune is that I am in want of an immediate supply of cash. What sum can you afford to pay down?"

"Why, Sir," pursing up his mouth and looking very grave, "money is rather a scarce article at the present time, and trade is dull."

"If so," said Domville, hastily taking up the manuscript, "I see we cannot agree. I wish you a good morning, Sir."

Though practice had not made him expert in striking bargains, this straight forward way of dealing was well calculated to elicit the highest offer from the intended purchaser.

"Stay, Sir, I beseech you—Since you

set your face against any other way, I must submit. Well then, Sir, if so, Sir, suppose I venture to offer you the sum of twenty pounds for these few poems."

"Twenty pounds," cried the seller indignantly, "they are surely worth much more than double that paltry sum."

"Indeed, Sir, I cannot afford you more."

"Then there is an end to all further discussion, I know those that will."

"I am sorry, Sir, that the price should part us. Will twenty-five pounds do?"

"No."

"How much, Sir, do you then expect?"

"I will not take less than fifty."

"Then, Sir, we cannot agree. Yet I am willing to bid as high as thirty."

"No, Sir, thirty pounds and fifteen

more to boot will not purchase them. Adieu, Sir."

The bookseller ceremoniously conducted the book writer to the outer door, but, as he forbore offering a higher price, the other departed with wide hasty strides, and a certain bustling manner, denoting discontent and wounded pride. Many more and deeper wounds were to be inflicted on that pride of his ere the day closed. Most publishers, to whom our author was a stranger, declined the purchase at any price. The highest sum offered amounted to only five pounds; even then, fears were expressed of its turning out a losing concern.

Strange, thought he, in the midst of his vexation, strange that the first applied to, and he a close griping rascal, is

beyond all proportion the most liberal in his offers.

The second interview he had with this man accounted upon rational grounds for the yet unaccountable generosity of his conduct. Domville slowly retraced his steps to the shop, crest fallen, and not without some apprehension of a lower price being now tendered : his fears were well grounded. He had, he said, just concluded a bargain with an eminent writer to a considerable amount, and repeating his usual cant about money being scarce, trade slack, and so forth, he could not, so circumstanced, afford so much as thirty pounds, but twenty were at his service, if that would suit.

“ Well, Sir, I dislike higgling ; let me have that sum, and the papers are yours.”

“ Oh, yes, Sir, certainly, this minute.—

But before we finally conclude, we'll agree, if you please, on the title-page."

"The title-page is already made out. — Look here — **THE POETICAL WREATH**, being Selections from the Port-Folio of — Four * * * *. — You will not wish to alter that, surely."

"With your permission, I conceive a material improvement could be made."

"As how?"

"Instead of the four stars you must permit me to insert your name and title at full length."

"As to that, Sir, I will by no means agree. My wish for the present is not to be known as the author."

"Then, Sir, you must excuse me. If you are positive on that head, I am compelled to decline the purchase."

"Suppose you insert my initials, C. D.

or even H. C. N. D. will not that answer your purpose?"

"Oh, Sir, that device will be deemed a mere trick, long exploded. I consider your name distinctly mentioned, as indispensable for the sale of the work."

"Why, the intrinsic merit of the performance, I should think, would prove the best recommendation."

"Oh, by no means; the name is every thing in these matters."

"Well, then, be it so.—Now for the cash, if you please."

"We will also add *Son to the late Viscount of that name.*"

"Why, in the name of justice, should the ashes of my father, who, God knows, never wrote a line in his life, be made answerable for the poetical sins of his descendant."

“ Still, sir, you must allow me in these matters of trade to be the best judge.”

“ Well, then, I see I must comply.—
Now nothing remains but——

“ We will also add, with your leave—
and Brother to the present Earl.——”

“ No, by heaven!—Never will I submit, on any account, to such a degradation.—It will look as if I thought the sanction of his name a needful passport to the public favor. No, not one word more on the subject, or we part for ever.”

Here our Poet, whose acute feelings had been much irritated by many a rough tongue in the course of his search, deeming this a proper vent for their utterance, pranced, stamped, stormed and raged about the room, as if he felt a score of needles piercing his skin. The publisher, however, contrived to pacify him, by agreeing to

wave the insertion of the offensive clause, and by paying down the twenty pounds. The transfer being made in due form, Domville returned home, still evincing his discontent in muttering fits: yet, after all, not a little pleased with having, by means of the purchase money, so materially recruited his finances.

CHAPTER XII.

A REMITTANCE.

ON the appearance of this elegant trifle, elegant as paper, type, hotpress and vignettes could make it, it soon became manifest that the publisher was right in his prognostics. It really had a rapid sale; three editions having gone off in less than three months. The chief, and perhaps only cause, may fairly be attributable to Mr. *Margin's* amendment in the title page. Even the censuring strictures of the Reviews, however judicious, by diffusing its fame, gave their helps to the product.

Although the author's profit remained at twenty pounds, the next supply of verses he brought to market reaped the benefit due to their elders: the bookseller, conceiving himself fully warranted by prudence to advance a no less sum than one hundred pounds for the copy-right. The tables were now turned in favour of our Poet: in as much as many of those, who with a supercilious air averted their faces from the tendered copy of his first production, now courted *the honour*, as they termed it, of becoming his publishers; but Domville remained steady to his old friend. It were also to be wished that he had remained steady to his much *better* friend, namely, the practice of œconomy he had so wisely adopted in his more penurious state. But misfortune had not dwelt with him long enough, completely to chasten and establish

his principles. The public applause and the profit it produced him were gleams of sun-shine, that had only the effect of relaxing his stoicism and expanding his heart for the indulgence of expensive amusements: the natural result was that he devoted less time to his studies. First he slackened, then entirely remitted the exertions, necessary for the production of other and better works. So that, when the scantiness of his finances compelled him again to make some fresh attempt, he was *at a stand*—found himself *out of tune*,—was not *in the humour*,—could not, for the *soul of him*, proceed—and, satisfying himself that *inspiration* is at no man's call, left his study in the pursuit of some undetermined object.

Luckily for his precarious situation, a supply arrived from a certain quarter he

certainly did expect to hear from ; but the amount remitted was considerably less than the sum he expected to receive.—To tell the truth, this expectation was probably the principal cause, perhaps unknown to himself, of his present supineness.

We'll first see how *this* turns out, ere we submit ourselves to the drudgery of application, is the mode of proceeding adopted by the greater number of expectants.

In relating the opulent period of Mr. Domville's life, we slightly mentioned a generous act of his, which really deserved the approbation of the humane and considerate. We allude to the two thousand pounds he presented to the nephew of the testator, as some indemnification for the disposal to his detriment of a property, the greater part of which, as heir at law,

he naturally considered himself entitled to. This man had a large family and was then in no very prosperous circumstances. The sum remitted proved so powerful an assistant that, by judiciously laying it out, he was rapidly becoming a wealthy merchant.

Our Hero one morning, among other projects that passed through his mind, determined on applying to him for a return of at least part of his liberal remittance, alledging with equal truth and justice that, as the law's decision had compelled him to refund every shilling of the bequeathed property, the two thousand pounds received from him were out of his own separate purse; he therefore fully relied that now, when their circumstances were reversed, he should meet from Mr.

Sandhurst with the same liberality Mr. Sandhurst had experienced from him.

In a double letter, post paid, the answer ran thus :

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ Duly received yours of the 20th ult. Cannot say as to the matter contained therein,—Enclose a fifty pound Bank of England Note.—Hope it will prove serviceable.—Wish to hear it came safe to hand.

“ Remain, honoured Sir,

“ Yours, &c

“ PETER SANDHURST.”

So nearly destitute was Domville of cash that, had he been called upon at that time for the payment of some trifling debts, he would have remained quite penniless; yet so high did he suffer his expectations to soar, that he had made sure the letter contained an order for the payment of £500 at least. No wonder then that he

stared with a contemptuous astonishment threatening rejection at, a paper, representing a sum of ten times less value.

In his first paroxysm of indignation, down into the fire he flung both letter and its contents: luckily, although a chilly morning, no fire glowed within; his knowledge of that circumstance was perhaps the cause of their being consigned to that quarter. The delusion we practise on others we often extend to ourselves. He then threw himself on a seat opposite, both his feet stuck on the bars, his elbows resting upon his thighs, his open palms supporting his head, and with a vacant stare kept his eye fixed on the objects of his wrath: when, struck with a sudden thought, he arose, snatched up the papers, and pacing the room with rapid

strides, cried out with rageful exultation :—

“ Yes, I will make the rascal feel for his niggardly ingratitude. I will straight return his shabby fifty pounds ; it shall be done in a blank sheet too. It were a dishonour for me to hold henceforth the slightest communion with so despicable a wretch.”

And, chuckling at his own silly conceit, he selected a folio sheet of the amplest dimensions, carefully depositing within its folds both the offensive note and letter ; and on the cover, affixed the impression of a large seal in three thick layers of molten wax.

The direction being written out, he rung the bell for the errand-boy to deposit the packet in the post-office. Fortunately the lad not being then within call, our fiery gentleman had time to cool. The

tamer, Poverty, soon brought him down from his lofty flight, he was easily persuaded to concede that a recovery of part of his property was better than none, and that a receipt of fifty pounds by a person in his penniless state, was a windfall of no daily occurrence. The consequence is easily guessed. The seals were broken open before they were quite cold—the wrapper unfolded—the bank note carefully taken thereout—and the affront quietly pocketed.

CHAPTER XIII.

FEMALE FRIENDSHIP.

FRESH tenders of service and those upon a much more liberal scale are now made.—A lady appears foremost in the list of our Poet's friends.

Lady Elizabeth Wells was not yet, strictly speaking, a demirep, but the repetition of the same acts, a little more glaring, would not fail to earn for her that honourable appellation. Domville had known her in the purer period of her

repute : she even then hinted to him her no very great dislike to a matrimonial connexion in terms as plain as decency, in its laxest mood, would allow ; yet he had been some how dull of comprehension. The fair one since thought it was high time her fame should acquire the protection of a creditable husband against the daily inroads of the malignant, and she naturally concluded that, though she was sunk lower in the public estimation, her former favourite had sunk still lower in pecuniary qualifications ; so that the chances of matrimony were more than ever in her favour. Her former ardour rekindled at the blaze of his fame ; his address she contrived to learn by an inquiry at his Publisher's. An invitation to dinner on Tuesday next, at half past five,

was the consequence of the information gained.

In gallant terms and not without a shrewd guess at her motive, he accepted the invitation, and was punctual to a minute: she no less punctual in receiving him, dressed out in all the charms mantua-makers, milliners, jewellers, her maid's and her own well practised skill, could bestow on her person. The interview passed away to the tolerable gratification of both; something was done and nothing concluded: more interviews succeeded. The gentleman was profuse in gallant flowery speeches; the lady would have preferred something more substantial. In proportion as his shyness made him recede for fear of committing himself too far, the bolder her advances to bring the negociation to a conclusion, fully convinced

that, if a wedding was to take place, to the altar she must lead instead of being led.

To bring about the desired event, her matchless female art did not desert her. The violation of the strict rules of propriety was ascribed to her excessive fondness of him, to a wish nearest her heart of seeing the object of her affections happy and in affluent circumstances. She loved him for his own sake ; and—and—and.— In short, she carried the romantic warmth of her expressions to such an extreme, as if she had been conning over for the occasion “ *La Carte du Tendre.*”

The gentleman was certainly not taken by surprise ; yet, although prepared for the attack, we can not say that his defence was conducted with much skilful

effrontery. Instead of carrying it *on* and himself *off* with evasive, rapturous speeches, he hemmed and stammered, and knew not what to say—looked very foolish, rallied a little, then slackened again, returned cold thanks, requested time to consider, promised an answer tomorrow—and arose to depart.

The lady, with her face dressed in smiles of ineffable tenderness, felt the choler rising in her throat.—“Well, till then, my love,” she said in sweetest tones of endearment. “Adieu, *Madam*,” at first replied the solemn blunderer; but correcting himself, cried out in a gayer tone, “Farewell, my dear, *dear* lady Elizabeth,”—and smiling waving his hand, departed.

The next morning, ere he began dressing himself, he had determined upon breaking up the intimacy, lest it should at length lead to the conclusion desired by

the lady and dreaded by the gentleman. He considered that his youth, his talents, his connexions, afforded him many chances of bettering his fortune; besides his affections were but very slightly involved in the intercourse and his principles fully against it; and when the figure of his adorable *Julie*, as he fondly called the fair stranger of the Glen, recurred to his mind, her ladyship appeared so completely destitute of every female attraction, that he felt no difficulty in penning the following letter; yet he withheld it in hopes that his silence would sufficiently intimate his intention, but the lady's repeated messages leaving him no option, it was at length sent.

“ I indulge a hope, my Lady, that you will consider an honest declaration of my sentiments the most proper return for the

honour you intend me. My heart is not at my disposal.—The tender of my hand alone were an offer unworthy your acceptance.

“ I have the honour to remain, &c.”

This laconic epistle brought down upon him her maid of honour. She hurried in, woe and consternation in her face, and the usual exclamations on such occasions burst forth.

“ Good God, Sir! what have you done? Sir, you have killed my lady. She has been in fits and swoonings ever since.—She knows not of my coming here. Indeed, poor thing, she is gone past her senses. I beseech you, Sir, return with me—The doctor is now with her: but you alone can restore her.”

Domville was not such a coxcomb as to believe that any woman, still less lady

Elizabeth, would die of love for him, yet he was persuaded to accede to the request, deeming probably that, as the story required confirmation, it was most fitting he of all others should ascertain the fact. On their way, he now and then cross-examined the damsel; in this however he so far failed, as his suspicions were neither confirmed nor dispelled. To prevent however the chance of further collusion, he dispatched the maid after some other doctor, on pretence that a consultation might be deemed advisable, reached the house alone—gave a gentle rap—was admitted and suffered to proceed; softly stepped up stairs towards the sitting room—was on the landing place—took breath and listened—was proceeding—saw the door opened a little—stood still—heard a well

known, female, voice in the most impassionate tone—

“ And will you leave me so soon. Then once more, my Love, ere we part — once more” ——

A smacking buss was now given, fervent as that which St. Francis beheld bestowed and returned in some recess, when the good Saint, in the innocence of his heart, lifted up his hands to heaven, thanking God that so much *Christian charity* was still left in the world.

A gentleman now came out, the door closed again; and they stood before each other face to face.

“ Well, Doctor,” cried the one sneeringly, “ how fares the lady.”

“ The lady, Sir, is well enough, that I can tell you, although no doctor.”

The sound of the voice helped Domville

to a recognition of the features which his sight failed to trace, as the thick crimson curtains darkened the light from the window. — Here exclamations like those in the skreen scene in the School for Scandal burst forth.

“Sir Henry Offham, by all that is wonderful!”

“Charles Nayland Domville, by all that is welcome!”

“Hush, Offham, Hush, you speak too loud, recollect that lady Elizabeth is dangerously ill—is dying.”

“Who told you such a story? She was never better in her life; that I can tell you; and will undertake to prove immediately.”

And with the air of a master he tried to re-open the door, but it was made secure;—he then rapped gently at first, but afterwards louder and louder, crying out:—

“Let us in, my dear lady Wells:—it is only Mr. Domville, a particular old friend of mine.”

But aware of the explanation that must ensue, her ladyship very wisely, having made sure her outer bulwark, retired, cursing her unlucky stars, into her *boudoir*, which we may well term a lady's citadel.

The noisy baronet fancying himself slighted, would have created a further disturbance, but Domville besought his attention and related the occasion of his visit; the other in return was to the full as communicative, when after all, it only appeared that the lady wanted two strings to her bow. Sir Harry who had the happy disposition of viewing every thing on the laughable side, unheeding his share in the transaction, gave way to loud bursts of merriment.

In the midst of his glee, a servant stepped up, announcing the doctor's arrival.

“ Bid him come up, said the baronet, we shall have some more sport.”

Here a pause of expectation ensued, whilst the limb of the faculty, with becoming gravity, ascended towards them, step by step, in measured succession. He was received most ceremoniously on the landing place, and was equally ceremonious in his greetings.

“ Ah Doctor, said the baronet, lengthening out his face to the utmost stretch of a woeful aspect,—the lady,—she is,—it shocks me to mention it,—but she is at death's door.”

“ At death's door!—Good God, sir, (pushing onwards) not a moment should be lost.—”

But his progress was arrested by the bolt within.

“ My good sir, we cannot enter:—she is not yet in a state to *receive company*. It is a most lamentable case, but in the mean time I’ll submit to your consideration every symptom of her disorder.”

Although this exordium was not exactly consonant with medical phraseology, the doctor assumed his usual attitude of intense listening, pursed up his mouth, contracted his eyebrows, leaned his head on one side, whilst the knob of his cane pressed hard upon his right cheek. Sir Harry cleared his throat, made the usual preparations for a learned delivery; but as grimaces, not words were the baronet’s forte, he could proceed but a little way before his ignorance of the subject betrayed him into such glaring incongruities, that

the doctor's cheek was released from the knob and facing the narrator, broke through the latter's assurance by the solemn gravity of his staring. Sir Harry rallied his impudence under the shelter of boisterous merriment, which was evinced by long and repeated peals of laughter: these and the doctor's wrathful seriousness also excited Mr. Domville's risible faculties; whilst the medical gentleman, with increased astonishment, stared at one and then at the other in vain for an explanation.

“Strange,—very strange,—a person of my professional consequence to be thus treated, It shall not rest here, I promise you.”

Our hero now thought proper to check his mirth, and partly pacified him by the assurance that no disrespect had been in-

tended; it was all owing to a mistake, but, since he was called in, he begged leave to tender him his fee: In that view was proceeding to open his pocket-book, but the merciless baronet interfered, and with violent gesticulations and loud professions of liberality, insisted upon his having that pleasure himself. Domville caught the wink the other gave and had the malice to act upon it: for, no sooner was the baronet ready with his tender, than he threw himself between the parties, protested that on him alone that honour devolved, which honor he would not concede to any prince on earth. We need not add that similar protestations were vociferated by sir Henry, when it became his turn to advance to the charge.

This ridiculous debate lasted long

enough to convince the doctor they were bantering him, he broke loose from them in such a passion, that when they overtook him at the street door and offered to pay him in good earnest, he ascribed their offers to a continuation of the same sport and departed indignant, rageful, threatening and unfee'd.

Lady Elizabeth, who had been an ear witness to the greater part of this noisy altercation, had now the good sense to consider her case hopeless with either of her former admirers, she in consequence made to herself what amends she could, by bestowing on some [needy adventurer her hand and fortune.

Giving my hero full credit for the delicacy of his sentiments, I have my doubts whether he would have extricated himself

with so much promptitude of decision from that dangerous pass, had he not felt his resolution, backed as it were, by Mr. Sandhurst's fifty pounds bank note.

The moral I would deduce from this latter observation is, that a good action is often beneficial to the Doer, not only in its immediate, but in its remote consequences also.

The process of my narrative suggests another ethical apophthegm: namely—as from one vice others spring up, so one act of duty is the parent of more. The remark is thus illustrated:—

Domville thought it now incumbent on him to supply, without loss of time, by his own industry the lack of those pecuniary helps he could have derived from so impure a source. Aware that he had nothing more

to expect from Mr. Sandhurst, and that on his pen alone he must henceforth rely for food, shelter and raiment, he set about another literary production in good earnest, and became once more equally economical of his time and money.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN ANNUITY.

BUT the Tempter, who is indefatigable for the increase of his proselytes, laid another trap for our incautious hero.

Three month's steady application had brought him pretty forward in his literary labours, and regular habits were in some degree contracted; when compliments were presented to him in a note from counsellor Cranbourne, requesting at one o'clock, next day, the favor of some conversation with him in his chambers.

Thither the young man went at the appointed time, wondering what could be the motive for this singular summons.

He was shewn into the counsellor's study who, after a sort of a circuitous, parading, preface, agreeably surprised him with the information that he (the counsellor) had it in commission from a very highly respectable quarter—(here the learned gentleman so reverently bowed his head, that the row of curls on the back of his well-powdered perriwig could be plainly seen in front) that he had it in commission, from a very highly respectable quarter to pay Mr. Domville, for an indefinite space of time, in quarterly payments, the first quarter to be paid in advance, which would be now disbursed, the sum of—four hundred pounds sterling *per annum*.

The counsellor was as good as his word :

Amongst law books, law cases and loose papers, one hundred pounds worth of bank notes were spread upon the table for his acceptance. Our Hero's fingers titilated with impatience to secure the needful, recollecting, we suppose, the old proverb, "between the cup and the lip, &c."— Yet he checked any outward symptom and with apparent self command, assuming an air of proud reserve, inquired, before he ventured to accept that sum, to whom he was indebted for so liberal a favour, and what was in consequence required of him.

Counsellor Cranbourne assured him that the only act required was his acceptance of the annuity ; but as to his Principal in the transaction (here he assumed an air of state mystery) he begged not to be

further pressed on that head, as he was bound in honour to secrecy.

No sacrifice of principle or of honour being demanded, Domville felt little reluctance in accepting the obligation; he without further delay took up the notes, deposited them in their intended receptacle, and making a bow of acknowledgement was for taking his leave, without even thinking of giving a receipt for the same. My learned friend, however, with a smile besought a longer stay for that purpose. In his hand he put a pen, and placed before him a ready drawn up receipt, his signature only lacking; it was thus worded.

Received of Counsellor Nathaniel Cranbourne the sum of one hundred pounds, being the first instalment out of four hundred pounds, which latter sum the counsellor engages to disburse yearly in equal quarterly payments, to the Honourable Charles Nayland Domville or his order.

The gentleman was now suffered to depart. With nimble steps and a joyful heart he hied him home—to resume his lucubrations, it may be supposed.—Oh no, his nerves were too much hurried for that purpose — but to count his treasure over and over again, secure the major part, with the remainder of Mr. Sandhurst's fifty, and then to dress, to dinner, to wine, to the opera, and what not. During the pauses of these enjoyments he tried, and with success, to trace up the gift to the real giver. His first and last conjecture rested on his brother.

Here we will endeavour to account rationally, that is to say politically, for the noble Earl shewing thus suddenly proofs of kindness, after years of total neglect, if not of active hostility.

Our author's poetical productions brought

him once more to the notice of the higher classes. His proud and well kept determination of concealing from the public his private wrongs, now that he had obtained celebrity in another way, was deemed noble and praiseworthy, even by those who during his obscurity had not even deigned to inquire after him. It was besides hardly possible for the most indifferent not to cry shame on a nobleman of such powerful and extensive influence, for suffering his own brother to sink into a mere pamphlet writer, to become a bookseller's hack, as the phrase is, in order to gain a scanty and precarious livelihood, whilst *he* wallowed in riches ; and this unnatural desertion owing probably to some trifling offence, hardly worth remembering after the hour it had been committed. The noble Earl had of course many enemies, whose malignity well knew

how to place his unbrotherly conduct in the most aggravated point of view; but he, in return, was well skilled in the art of counteracting the intended effect. Counsellor Cranbourne had orders to exhibit *in confidence* the receipt obtained in proof of his lordship's bounty; the newspapers in his lordship's interest were instructed to refute their adversary's assertions, which they did, introducing the subject in their usual, hacknied, manner.—they being credibly informed—having it in their power to state—being enabled to vouch from authority: and so forth, intimating also, but in guarded expressions, that they were happy to inform the public of a reconciliation being in contemplation from a certain highly respectable quarter, and that it was not improbable but that the Senate would have once more the benefit of the honorable

Mr. D——'s talents and eloquence. At all events, in some way or another, his Majesty's Government will be strengthened by his re-accession to their cause.

These insinuations had the effect of sinking the young man in the public estimation. Some deemed it a meanness to accept any pecuniary favor after such studied insults and neglect: they, forsooth, would rather starve a thousand times over than submit themselves to such a degradation. Others judging (we suppose from themselves) that the acceptance would close follow the offer, accused him rather too hastily of political apostacy; whilst the majority seeing their client provided for in some sort, and not stopping to enquire further, held their peace and were satisfied.

In order to silence such inuendoes, Mr. Domville transmitted the following letter

to the Editor of the Morning Chronicle for insertion.

SIR,

“I have a right to complain of the injustice many persons have done and are doing me, by their ready credulity in adopting, without inquiry, the unfounded aspersions of my enemies. To all such I beg leave to say that, they are mistaken who think me capable of political apostacy. I am one of those who will not accept of any situation, however advantageous, that would be the means of checking the freedom of thought and action. This averment I make public as the test of my political creed. Let my past, and henceforth, let my future conduct be tried by that rule.”

Surely, the honorable writer of this letter must have forgotten upon what slight cause he forsook his former political friends and sided with their opponents. After all it was hardly worth while to notice such an every day's occurrence. The slight buzz this affair created was soon silenced, it

shared the fate of many more of equal importance that daily rise and sink, produced by the numerous clashing interests of this busy, feverish, race.

CHAPTER XVI.

A JOURNEY.

ABOUT this time, his friend and former correspondent, Mr. Langley, surprised him with an agreeable and unexpected visit. This gentleman had been for some time absent, as envoy to one of the German courts. During their conversation, he invited our hero to accompany him to Florence, whither he was about to be dispatched in a diplomatic capacity. The offer would have been accepted, had he

not had at that time much at heart a travelling project, which he soon after put in execution. He, therefore, could only thank his friend for his kind offer, promising, however, to accept it, should another opportunity occur.

Domville thought, and in our opinion very justly, that before we venture abroad to view foreign countries, a personal survey of our own should be first undertaken. With that intent he took a seat in a stage-coach travelling to the North. A motive dear to a sentimental tourist induced him to prefer that direction. He wished after the lapse of so many years to revisit the place, not exactly of his birth, but where he had been nursed and breeched into boyhood. He still retained some very endearing recollections of his mother, and of the friendly woman who had nursed him in

sickness and cheered him in health. There was besides in his heart an attachment to the particular scenes of his youthful sports, and to well remembered objects, in the proximity of which, the dawn of reason, by some more lucid conception, had given him the first intimation of his being a rational creature.

This place, the original seat of the family, contained its burial vault. Thither the day after his arrival he repaired—approached with filial piety and awe the tomb of his parents; but he chiefly and instinctively turned to the spot where his mother was laid: the sight affected him even to tears. She had been an indulgent yet considerate parent; she loved him as her son, and he felt within him that reverential gratitude, a sure indication that, had she been living, her chief source of

felicity would have been derived from the impulses of his filial heart. Of his father's memory he retained fewer sentiments of tender regard : as the partialities of nature has been faint in the parent, the attachment returned could not be very fervid.

To the habitation of his old nurse he next repaired, directed by the well remembered foot-way. She was yet alive, but memory had lost its seat ; age had brought on a second childhood ; yet, even in that helpless state, by the placid resignation of her countenance, by the expressions that fell from her lips, and by many other tokens, could be traced the former worth of that friendly creature ; that worth was also well remembered by those on whom it had been chiefly bestowed. All about her was neat and clean : The high

backed chair in the chimney corner, her prescriptive right, the waywardness of age allowed, and all its calls attended to. She had reared up her family to moral and industrious habits, and the debt was amply repaid by the daily soothings of those filial attentions which they, in their turn, might reasonably expect from their children.— Thus beneficial to all is the interchange of nature's kindly offices: unlike the traders of a bartering world, there are no losers in the transaction.

He had also the pleasure of meeting with some of his playmates, now grown up to man's estate. He did not give them a few hasty greetings and depart, he tarried with them, listened with interest to their domestic concerns, and felt a pleasure in their pride at his enquiries. The sundry helps his discernment justified, afforded him

delight at the moment he bestowed them, and the remembrance proved a solace to his heart, in the hours of depression and adversity. It is gratifying to experience how bland and genial it is to one's feelings even the delineation of this very slight and imperfect sketch. The boisterous and angry scene that is to follow, although the execution of it, so as to produce effect, requires humour and elaborate skill, afforded the author much less satisfaction in the composition.

CHAPTER XVI.



A NOCTURNAL EXHIBITION.

AFTER the expiration of a few days, he found himself towards evening, the *sixth* well squeezed individual, stowed within a heavy stage coach journeying northwards. If peace and concord dwelt with the families he had lately visited, within this vehicle, anger, spite and brawling, in most discordant notes had raged, and were now on the point of bursting forth afresh. Never perhaps did the freaks of chance

collect together a more heterogeneous crew.

From out of one of the back corners projected the dark, lengthy, rawboned figure of a French *Esprit fort* who, however incredulous in other respects, had without much investigation taken for granted that, within the *cellueæ* of his skull, resided a very considerable portion of the reasoning faculty allowed to the human intellect. The other angle was tenanted by a squat, chubby, methodist Parson, who found his present call a snug way of working out comforts for his body in this world and salvation for his soul in the next. The space occupied by those gentlemen allowed rather too narrow a space for the *embonpoint* of a Lady, more bulky than beseems the fair, who indeed protested and declared that, within the

whole range of her experience, she had never been so squeezed before. The estimate she had formed of her acquirements fell very little short of the standard of perfection at which the Frenchman rated his own: her pretensions rested chiefly upon the strength of her having read every novel of late appearance, by means of which, she fancied herself conversant in matters of high life and of fashionable importance.

The opposite side of the carriage held a less obtrusive trio who, however, had their full allowance of vanity, as their several vocations will prove.

A Painter who had left town on a tour, in order to import therein on his return views of hills, castles, meres and churches. A spruce Dancing-master, who during the summer vacation had hied to London, and

was returning to resume his periodical rounds, his feet in the possession of a *new step*, then in the rage of fashion; and last and least, our unassuming Hero who, nevertheless, as a *poet*, cannot be supposed to lack any of the essentials of that quality, which so powerfully bolstered up the self importance of the other five.

The whole crew may well be termed a set of Idlers, who consume the good things of this world and produce nothing in return. We venture upon this remark, because it is not likely that any political economist would waste his precious time in the perusal of these trifling pages; else we might be told or reminded, that a society is always well constituted, when the number of consumers is adequate for a consumption of produce, that affords a remunerating price to the growers: *ergo*, no

invidious epithet can attach to any of the members that perform their part in the machinery of the social frame.

If we were modestly to intimate that the remark is made in a moral point of view only, we should be thus silenced. “Morality, sir, is a chimera; practicable utility is all in all.”

The three first inside passengers had been the lady, the painter and the dancing master. The knight of the brush tried to engage the lady's attention by such gallant speeches as his memory supplied him with, but his rival's fluency of delivery and perhaps, personal appearance, had obviously obtained for him the greater portion of the fair one's smiles. When the coach stopped to give the horses water, the two gentlemen tempted by the fineness of the sky, stormed at the same time the coachman's

seat in order to ride outside. There was choice of room upon the *imperial*, but both ambitioned the honour of sitting with the driver. After some altercation, to him reference was made: the adjudication was again in favour of the son of Terpsichore; the decision was probably influenced by sundry indications which gentlemen of the long whip seldom fail to notice; namely, the one appeared much more free with his cash than the other. For these two very slight causes, our sketching tourist had suffered himself to be miserable for so many hours.

A heavy storm coming on, compelled them both to take shelter inside, but in the interval their vacant seats had been occupied by the Parisian and the Parson. The appearance of these checked the propensity of the irritated gentleman to endeavour a

retaliation on his opponent for both his repulses ; and the mighty feud which soon after broke out between the new comers, hushed every suggestion of his spleen. As the *tootling* of a flute is silenced amidst the loud blasts of a couple of trumpets.

There had been a little angry sparring before : it was thus resumed.

“ Then, sir, you do not believe in miracles.”

“ I believe in *noting* I don’t understand.”

“ Then your belief must be very much circumscribed indeed !—But, what, for instance, have you to say against the miracle of Jonah and the whale.”

“ What Jonas and dee vale !— Oh, tear, what can dee matter be !”

“ A song is no answer.”

“ No more is de vale swallowing Jonas a miracle ; dee vonder would be for Jonas to swallow dee vale.”

This reply was sufficiently incensing, it received a further aggravation from the lady's applauding burst of laughter, who protested that, within the precincts of her intercourse with the world, she had seldom heard any thing so smart, so witty—and so *truly* original.

The parson collected all his powers for a thundering reply, but the pouring out of of the phial of his wrath was, for the present, checked by the stopping of the coach for the admission of our Hero.

Domville disliking the narrow limits allowed for his limbs, would willingly have indulged the passengers with the vacuum his removal would have caused, maugre the rainy state of the atmosphere; but that the male occupiers of the back seats held out great promise of sport, to the beholders at least. An angry swell of countenance

occasional growls of discontent, looks of hostility and other tokens of defiance threatened a renewal of the storm. All these were evident symptoms that they had not well digested the matter and manner of the late altercation.

An innocent question of the lady to the Parisian, like Doctor Franklin's conductor, directed on which topic the conflicting elements should now rage.

“ I hope, *Monsieur*, that you allow there are many very great writers in this country. For instance, I may truly assert, that within the whole course of my reading—’

“ Oh *oui, Madame*, your Thomas Paine is a very—very great man indeed: but den he borrowed all his opinions from the French *Philosophes*.”

Any downright John Bull would have

vented his disapprobation and exhausted his spleen by merely crying out — Damn Tom Paine and the French Philosophers.

But our Religionist adopted expressions in his opinion more warrantable, because more consonant with scriptural phraseology, although, perhaps, not so conformable to the mild spirit of Christian charity, by which he consigned them all to the same implied quarter, not forgetting far famed Voltaire in the sweeping condemnation.

This wounded the Frenchman in the tenderest part; because to his friend Voltaire he allowed a superiority of intellect above every other human being, *himself* not excluded. He gabbled out a reply, which rage, bad English, and an admixture of French, made nearly unintelligible. Sufficient however was made out to provoke a retort from his wrathful

opponent, and on they proceeded in a louder key and with increased vehemence of manner and invective, when a respite was given to their lungs by the final stopping of the carriage for the day.

As soon as the coach door was open, Domville glad of a release, jumped out; the painter and dancing-master followed him and made for the house, so did the parson.

“*Les Sauvages! Quelle grossièreté! Ils manquent absolument de politesse. Permettez, Madame.*—And finding himself safe on solid ground, *Monsieur* helped out *Madame* with a parading air of gallantry quite Parisian, and handed her, he squaring, she bustling, into the apartment allotted to them. The Company sat for some time looking at each other in a sort of stupid, sulky, silence.

“Well, Madam, how did you like the

face of the country we passed through," said Domville, wishing to elicit something worthy of note from his companions.

"I assure you, Sir, in the whole extent of my observations, I never beheld a finer."

"It appeared to me quite tame and uninteresting. I did not observe one group of objects worth the pencil's selection."

"Yet there stands a very magnificent seat three miles hence—quite a new built mansion. When it was completed, a grand ball was given under my direction, in which I officiated as Master of Ceremonies."

"If you wish to see superb edifice, you must go to France. Noting in this country like our chateaux."

"As far as I could discern, there seemed

a lamentable deficiency of chapels for the godly."

"*Ma chapelle est dans le Temple de la Raison. Je n'en reconnais point d'autre excepté*, turning to the lady; his stiff declamatory manner relaxing into a bow and and a smile quite irresistible—*excepté celle de la beauté*.

The fair one bridled and nodded assent—*Oui, oui, c'est bien observé*; and whilst the gentleman, now drawn up in full length, snuff box in hand, was enjoying the consciousness of having elicited, in rapid succession, a deep philosophical thought and delivered a compliment *quite original*,—the conversation proceeded.

"For my own part, resumed Domville, a country is always interesting to me, on the face of which the promise of abundant

crops denotes industry and a right mode of cultivation."

" True, Sir, and I may be permitted to add, that it never occurred otherwise to me, within the whole compass of my knowledge."

" But yet you catch nothing grand, nothing striking—all too monotonous—too *sleek*, for either pencil or brush. North Wales for the picturesque."

" Poh," cried the dancing-master, pleased with his own conception of a truism. " I prefer good living in a valley to starving on a mountain."

" You talk of mountains and North Wales; but is all that to the Alpes and the Pyrenees: mere *taupinieres*!—but you call hills of mole "

" Mount Ararat is, I believe, the highest mountain in the world."

“ Mount Arat ! Vere is that pray ? ”

“ Seek and you will find.”

The reply was to the full as contemptuously delivered as the question was put.

“ I tell you vat, mister Parson—”

But the entrance of supper restored the equilibrium of peace, likely to be again disturbed by a further prosecution of the dialogue.

The lady of course was placed at the upper end of the table, the dancing-master figured at the bottom, the others occupied the sides ; the two former disputants, positively and figuratively stationed themselves opposite each other : but however inveterate their hostility, the calls of hunger most effectually produced a cessation for the time being. The contention seemed now which should devour the greater por-

tion of food; even in this respect their national characteristics were apparent. Had the wager been confined to a short space of time, the dispatchful voracity of the Frenchman would have won; but let them grind and masticate till one is compelled to give over, we rather think that the quantity destroyed by him of England would have established his pretensions to his being the better man. Even Monsieur le Philosophe was amazed at the potentiality of his antagonist in conveying into his mouth, and dispatching pieces of meat of enormous dimensions.

“ *Ah, comme il avale, !*” cried he, giving almost at the same time a practical illustration of the feat, by one of equal magnitude.

The supper ended, a short pause suc-

ceeded ; during which every one was left to his own thoughts and digestion.

Whenever Domville had put up at an inn for the night, by a strange perversion of taste, not however more peculiar to himself than to his historian, he repined at the order and regularity that in these modern times, so much to one's comfort, pervade every department ; in as much as they prevent the possible occurrence of *Adventures*, such as we read in our earlier novel writers. He much wished to witness similar ones, were it at some inconvenience and even risk to himself. Casting a glance at the company, he fancied they were fit materials (other causes concurring) for the production of some droll incident.

In that frame of mind, a waiter informed

him that his master, as a particular favour, requested to speak with him. This leads me to state the predicament in which mine host of the Red Bull is placed at the present juncture.

The inn in his occupation stood at the edge of an extensive heath close by the road side, being what is termed a half-way-house. Owing to an increase of custom, it had been deemed a good speculation to pull down the old, inconvenient, building, and to erect a new one on the same scite. The arrival of the present passengers happened when the greater part of the new erection was completed, and only three rooms, great and small, of the old remained fit for use. Now, all the modern sleeping apartments had been put into requisition by a sudden and unexpected influx of *Carriage Company*, whose

bearing promised to afford much larger profits, than what was likely to be gathered from the purses of the stage coach passengers. He therefore wanted to gain the ear and, through that medium, the favour of one of those whom he intended to consign to the back settlements, in order that it might be intimated to the remainder in terms, likely to win their compliance. Our Victualer proved himself a skilful Physiognomist, by pitching upon our Hero for his negociator in this delicate emergency.

Requesting a sight of the apartments, he followed the landlord through the passage that led to the old building: it was almost a hopeless case. Only one apartment and two beds for four sleepers, a small closet for the lady, and one of equal dimensions tendered for his own separate

use, the acceptance of this bribe he, however, had his reasons for declining; yet he readily agreed to befriend the publican, as there appeared a chance of bringing about, in some shape, the event he so ardently wished.

Furnished with this information, he returned to his company, but delayed a disclosure till symptoms of drowsiness intimated a speedy call for the chambermaid; our Contriver then availed himself of the temporary absence of the oppugners to impart, in conciliatory terms, what kind of accommodation awaited them for the night, exonerating, as well as he could, the landlord from all blame. The lady was induced with some difficulty to occupy the closet, although she averred that, within the whole scope of her life's transactions, she was never before reduced

to such a situation ; and the two gentlemen after sundry grimaces submitted to share the same bed ; their own dislike, however, considerably reduced in expectation of witnessing a greater dislike evinced by others. But the main difficulty still remained ; how was it possible to induce the two hostile champions, spite of their acrimonious hatred, to lay themselves down, side by side, perhaps cheek by jowl, within the narrow precincts of one couch, just as if they were of the same kidney.

As he rightly conjectured that no persuasion of language could remove that obstacle, they were kept ignorant of their destination, till all the men were mustered in the sleeping room. The two more peaceable travellers betook themselves : to their own nook and doffed their clothes : Domville, with the help of some blankets,

his own great coat and his port-mantua for a pillow, formed a tolerable place of repose upon an old sofa, whilst the remaining two stood inactive in astonishment, stared about them, then at their companions, then at the bed, then at each other, haughtily demanding an explanation which was now given to them.

Their reluctance to the proposed arrangement was expressed with great vehemence of manner and symptoms of mutual disgust; they threatened, stamped, nay, they both swore that they would much rather lie in a ditch than occupy the same bed: but there was no other for them, no human habitation near, the night far gone and most inclement, for it rained in torrents. Now our hero adduced the best palliative he had in store, alledging that the inconvenience could be but of

very short duration, as to-morrow, by four in the morning, they must be again on their journey.

What could be done.—No option left.—The necessity of the case at length bent their stubborn wills to acquiescence, but with a very ill grace. Grumbling and growling, they doffed their clothes, when, in the act of depositing their carcasses within the sheets, a fresh altercation arose ; they both strenuously contended for the right side of the bed. This point was warmly and angrily debated, and nearly produced a breach of the peace ; however the Parson gained it, upon a reference to the company ; he having alleged as being the best reason either party adduced for the preference, that he was *a married man*.

Behold then the lights put out and all still around, when the silence was disturbed

by the reverend gentleman's large inflated nose, singing a snoring tune in the deepest bass, —the usual proclamation he generally gave out of having enjoyed a hearty evening meal. The philosopher, who began to feel the pressure of Morpheus upon his eyelids, by no means relished the melody of this music, it partook besides too much of the nasal twang of psalm singing to suit his taste. He was also dissatisfied with his share and side of the bed allotted him.

To remedy these inconveniences by one contrivance, he ventured to press his knees against the distended abdomen of his sleeping partner, intending, by continued and increasing pressure, to shove him by degrees to the extremity of the bed; that point gained, a fall on the boards were an easy matter to accomplish, by which means he would at

once get rid of the musician and his thorough bass.

This wise manœuvre was however frustrated—Our parson awoke when very near the fatal brink. As if by inspiration he dived into the enemy's mode of warfare; immediately, like a hedgehog, he collected himself into a rotund mass, and, by grasping with both hands the sheet and mattrass, prevented a further loss of territory. The Frenchman perceived the enemy upon the alert, yet resolved to persevere, and with an appearance of gaiety cried out:—

“ *Allons, Monsieur le Saint, il faut, demenager. — Vite, denichez d'ici. — Oh, Parbleu, je vous ferai deguerpir.*” And renewed the attack with greater fierceness.

The national characteristics of the two combatants may again be traced by their adoption of a different system of tactics.

The French Hero, still upon the offensive, hoped to win the *night* by sudden jolts or jerks against the embodied strength of his antagonist. But the English commander, having stood his ground against the first dreadful shock, quickly occupied the space left vacant by the other, who gave way some little, in order to renew the attack with greater vigour. The same manœuvres were repeated with the same results, till the assailant baffled, exhausted, and breathless had been driven, inch by inch, to the outer limits of his dominions. It was now that our Gideon found his voice—

“Avaunt! Satan, I defy thee and thy works.”

This solemn objurgating command, backed by a timely and forcible push, fairly ejected the Frenchman from the bed,

and down on the boards this bag of bones rattled in its fall.

At that moment, the moon herself desirous of witnessing a scene that promised such excellent sport, peeped through the clouds and curtainless windows, indulging at intervals the spectators with the benefit of her nocturnal light.

The discomfitted son of Belial, not at all relishing the effect of this retributive justice that subjected him to the very disaster he had striven hard to inflict upon another, arose furious and seizing his cane, retaliated, without mercy, on the parts exposed to its descending fury, in the foulest language reproaching the saint with being no gentleman, else, instead of the bastinado, he would punish him with sword and pistol.

“ Since thou provokest me, with the

arm of flesh will I fight thee, and the Lord have mercy on thy sinful soul."

So saying, he flung off the clothes, leaped out of bed and like a bull dog, flew at the throat of his foe, becoming in his turn the assailant in good earnest. They met, they closed and struck and struggled, and on the floor they fell, and rolled, and stamped, and kicked, and rose again, and fought and wrestled afresh.—The jabbering gibberish of the one, the sonorous intonations of the other, were the accompanying music to this dreadful affray.

The Gallic champion, finding himself worsted in the engagement, had tried the virtue of another set of weapons: his nails had traced many a bleeding track on the face and even on the more fleshy region of the parson's rear. Now, as his last

resource, in order to tear the laurel from the Briton's brow, he sought to tear:—

Not a moment had he to lose. Our countryman had at length contrived to confine him within the gripe of his sinewy arms, (it had the effect of a straight waistcoat) and was indulging him with such a fraternal hug, as a bear would bestow on a monkey,—when, unluckily, by a dexterous snap, he felt within the Frenchman's tusky grinders his wide proboscis squeezed to the flatness of a pancake, and in our opinion with strict poetical justice, that organ being deservedly punished, as the trumpet that gave the signal for battle. In vain did the methodist with arms extended and fists clenched in dolorous agony, release the philosopher from his confinement, evidently soliciting by that act a cessation of hostilities, the Frenchman was by no means

induced to follow his example, he kept a tight hold, thus making his teeth perform that *tweaking* operation, usually assigned to the fingers, and seeming to take a peculiar delight in the roaring notes of distress and in the writhing contortions of his sensitive foe.

At this period of the battle, Domville almost suffocated with laughter, dreading some serious injury, arose and called for lights. They were soon at hand, for the uproar was summoning to the spot landlord, landlady, servants and helpers. They beheld, on one side, the philosopher, his shirt of late none of the soundest, hanging down in tatters, front and rear, through the gaps of which was exposed his tawny hide, hairy as a baboon's; the similitude was still more striking from the grins, grimaces and antic gestures, which rage

and pain extorted from his limbs and features. On the other, our preacher just released from the homicidal fangs of a graceless infidel, limping about the room, roaring out by fits for every pain, one hand pressed on the bleeding wounds, the other contracted into an enormous fist, threatening further application on the already well-belaboured carcase of his opponent, moreover venting his wrath in loud denunciations, partly religious, partly profane. It appeared however evident that the result of the fight proved so very unsatisfactory to both sides, that neither was inclined to sing the *Te Deum* of victory.

More adventures occurred, but they are such as the chaste muse is unwilling to record. The dancing master was somehow missing.—The curiosity ascribed to the fair sex failed to bring out the literary

lady from her closet, were it merely to inquire after the occasion of this dreadful affray: she probably acquired more than an equivalent by her seclusion; yet she subsequently complained that, within the whole pale of her conception, she could not have been more unpleasantly disturbed. The Painter had a full view of the combatants as they were above described; panting, discomposed, bruised, excoriated and bleeding from the fight. It is to be hoped that his pencil will gratify the Town with at least a sketch of the scene, in which he will have full scope to indulge his love for the picturesque.

The Frenchman had sneaked to his recess, the landlord could now find another bed for the Parson, whither he was led, and the landlady prepared a hot plaister for the *dental* wounds inflicted on his nose.

Silence again reigned in the dwelling, and those went to sleep that could.

The next morning when they were again collected within the vehicle, a sort of awkwardness fettered the tongue of each inmate. The champions, their heads bandaged and well plaistered, were heartily ashamed of the late specimen of their prowess, and brooded in silence over the past transaction. The others checked the rising laugh, humanely aware that their mirth would too roughly lacerate the feelings of the sufferers; only when the fit was too violent for suppression, they would thrust their heads out of the carriage, pretending to look at some object, and thus indulge the propensity without a witness; in that manner they reached the next town: here they all parted, taking different directions.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FAMILY OF THE WRONGHEADS.

OUR Tourist having now means and leisure, and amusement being his pursuit, the length of stay at places was determined rather by inclination or the caprice of the moment than by any regular system. He proceeded and returned on horseback, in a carriage, and even on foot, just as he felt himself disposed; met with such accidents as generally betide other

people, and therefore not worth recording; improved his health, enlarged his heart, gained some practical knowledge of men and manners, and acquired an accession of ideas that would bestow additional value on any new work, he should hereafter be disposed to treat the Public with.

The transactions of one night, however, we cannot forbear recording: our Hero will witness sundry adventures without being at any trouble in producing them.

In one of his rides towards London, the only inside companion of his journey was a bustling, well fed, middle aged, gentleman, fond of his ease and hearing himself talk, which he did in rather an authoritative manner: that habit he had so much contracted at home, that he could not well divest himself of it when abroad. On every topic, religious, moral or political, however intricate, *he* had made up

his mind ; it was so and so ; and those were fools or knaves who thought otherwise. In his domestic arrangements he fancied himself an excellent manager, yet no master's commands were disregarded with more impunity. His error arose from his mistaking boisterousness for decision and threats for action, the exertion of the lungs being all the exertion he deemed requisite ; yet some decision was clearly evinced by his imprudence in forming new acquaintances, which, during the fervor of the novelty, he would call *contracting a friendship*. In a short conversation with a stranger and, for very slight causes, should he then happen to be *in the humour*, he would pronounce him to be a d—— clever, honest, fellow ; no every day acquaintance. — “ Sir, I rate very highly both his character and intellect ;

yet, such a man might pass before a fool and not be noticed."

To prevent therefore himself from ranking in that class, he would often go much further than the cautious policy of the present generation, for reasons best known to themselves, deems it at all prudent. He proceeded on the warrantry of such an inference as this :—Since he felt himself so extremely happy in the society of his new acquaintance, it was, by all means, his interest to cultivate a further intercourse.¹

"The gentleman would surely indulge him with his company to-day to dinner ; indeed he must not be denied : it would also prove a high treat to Mrs. Westloe and daughter.—Come, Sir, let us disregard ceremony ; fools may entrench themselves behind etiquette, but the *discerning* need no such shelter."

But he who trusted to such glowing protestations would soon find, that the sudden fervor of this man's friendship was nothing but a *straw* fire, producing a great blaze of short duration, and leaving little or no warmth behind.

Our Traveller happening to utter a remark that pleased Mr. Westloe, he aroused himself from a dozing propensity that was stealing upon him: and they entered into conversation, in which the latter bore an animated share.

In the very height of his satisfaction, the coach, the slowness of whose progress had been a short time before the theme of his vituperation, made a stand before a genteel looking house, about a mile distant from the town of——. The name is here purposely omitted, in order to prevent malignant imputations: although, at times,

we indulge in *general* satire, we never intend that our shafts should be aimed against individuals. The coachman opening the door, asked him whether he would not be pleased to alight, as they had now arrived before his house.

“What, already!—’Tis my home sure enough.—Now, Sir, (to Domville,) take your *mutton* and spend the day with us. To-morrow early, a coach starts for town; your obliging us will only occasion the loss of half a day.”

The very reflection that would have induced another person to decline the honour was, with our Hero, an inducement to accept it. The distant reserve that in this country one stranger preserves towards another, a’though perhaps fully justified by prudence, was not suited to his generous, unsuspecting, disposition; he

construed such a reserve into a mean suspicion harboured by those who, judging of others by themselves, were for keeping any casual acquaintance at arms' length. It was obvious however, that the present hospitable entertainer, who freely opened his door to an accidental fellow-traveller, was not of that class, he therefore deserved from him a similar return of confidence. Desirous of shewing the gentleman that his civility was not unworthily bestowed, and further encouraged by the respectable appearance of the house, he accepted the invitation. Both then made for the entrance hall, and in compliance with Mr. Westloe's directions, Domville's luggage followed.

When the Owner had introduced his guest into a parlour, after a short conversation, he pulled out his watch.

“ Dinner by this time must be ready—I ordered it to be upon the table at three precisely.” Here he rung the bell, but as the summons produced no immediate attendance, the gentleman had full leisure to proceed. “ Believe me, Sir, nothing like punctuality and regularity in a house. Though my friends style me an easy, good-natured, fellow, what the French call *debonnair*, at home, I am a Disciplinarian I assure you.”

By sundry indications our Hero was already led to entertain a suspicion that there must be some discrepance in the assumed and in the real fact, and that to use the expression of a corrector of *Errata*, for *Disciplinarian* read *Latitudinarian* : the sequel proved that his suspicions were grounded in truth.

No servant answering the call, the bell

was applied to with such violence that, at last, it compelled the appearance of one.

“ You, fellow, why did’nt you attend my first call?—You deserve to be turned away for that neglect.—Where was you?”

“ Sir, I was up stairs.”

“ How dare you be any where but in attendance?”

“ I was in attendance upon young Mistress.”

“ Your attendance on *me* is what I principally require—Is dinner ready?”

“ No, Sir, not quite.”

“ How is that? It is now ten minutes beyond the time I ordered it.”

“ Young Mistress ordered it to be put off to four.”

“ The Devil she did!—It seems young Mistress is Mistress and Master too.—An unfledged *Chirpling* to rule the roost!—this

will never do.—By the Lord, I will look to it and shortly too. Go, Sir, and tell Mrs. Westloe that I have a Gentleman to dinner here to-day, and that I expect—but the fellow is sure to commit some blunder. I'll go myself.”

After a slight apology to his guest, he departed on that hopeful errand. Ascending the stairs towards his wife's apartment, he determined to prevent the expressions of her expected anger for his incautious invitation, by a loud inquiry respecting the dinner's delay, rightly presuming that the first blow is half the battle: but the gentleman's politics were baffled by the lady's similarity of manœuvring. Her officious maid had already given all the information in his power to bestow: thus he met her fully prepared to act on the offensive. His wrath was

however somewhat assuaged by his daughters's more ardent reception, after the absence of two days;—a few filial kisses, even a hearty shake of the hand, and “I am glad to see you back, Pa,” was the welcome.

Then, whilst the Master was clearing his voice and mustering up resolution for the intended attack, thus begun the Mistress.

“Mr. Westloe, I'm quite surprised at you.”

“At me, Madam! On what account, pray. I rather think I have a right to express my astonishment—”

“How could you, Sir, think of introducing here a stranger, a mere coach-passenger, of whom nobody knows any thing.”

“*I* Madam, know and can affirm that he is a gentleman. I fancy that I am

seldom mistaken in that particular.”

“ No one more so.”

“ I say, Madam, and repeat that my notions on that head are unerring.”

“ Why, it was but the other day, that you took upon yourself to introduce, at your card-club, another of your picked up gentlemen who turned out, after all, to be a downright sharper.”

“ I desire, Madam—”

“ Bless me, don’t bawl out so loud : it flurries one so.—The fellow contrived to receive his winnings in good bank bills and to pay his losses in forged ones.”

“ The whole club is a set of shallow pated ninnies to have made such a rout about it, they only got laughed at for their pains, and they richly deserved it.—Besides the fact was never proved against him.”

“ Nay, your new friend proved it him-

self, by absconding with his booty, and now we are to entertain another gentleman of the same kidney, who, for aught I know, may be worse than the first.—Some highwayman, possibly, who may let in his confederates to cut our throats, this blessed night.—Indeed you have no sort of consideration for *one's nerves*.”

Mr. Westloe replied to his lady's apprehensions by a loud burst of laughter. “Liddy, my dear, hand me your salts: this boisterousness is unbearable,” the further progress of the debate was prevented by the young lady's inquiry——

“And pray, Pa, what sort of a personal appearance has this *incognito* of yours?”

“Why, Girl, such a personal appearance as your spouting captain can't match, with all his theatricals.”

“ One of your old musty politicians, I suppose.”

“ I don't know what you mean by old musty politicians; this gentleman, however, is young and handsome, can talk small talk with the ladies, I warrant him, and coax their silly hearts to mistake tinsel for gold too.”

“ Here Mrs. Westloe, who was quite a *Pessimist*, suffered her suspicions to take a different direction.

“ So much the worse. The more blamable you for subjecting your family to the schemes of a fortune hunter.”

But the daughter expressed a different opinion; the information received induced her to throw her all efficient weight into her father's scale.

“ I protest, Mamma, you are by much

too timorous. I am for venturing a little; you square prudential folks are not to my taste. I like to be now and then a little dashing and eccentric."

Aye, but remember, Liddy, repentance ever follows rashness,"

"Poh,—you remind me of Miss Philpot, who was so afraid that every body would run away with her that, at last, she was fain to run away with her footman."

"This timely interference put her father in good humour, who pinching her cheek and tapping her on the neck, called her his darling—*his own daughter*."

Previous to this, however, Miss Westloe in order to ascertain whether she ought to honour the stranger with her company, had commissioned her maid to obtain a sight of the gentleman and to report progress. In consequence, she was hastily summoned

into the back room, where she had a full view of their guest, who was then pacing up and down the garden walk, her fair self concealed behind the window curtain, whence she could securely peep.

Mrs. Westloe, whom a similar motive called to the same spot, rather reluctantly acknowledged that his person had not much the appearance of a cut-throat robber, but added, in order to abate the value of the concession, that the more favorable the appearance the greater the danger; whilst the gentleman taking her first declaration as an acknowledgment of his discernment, boldly asserted, that he would stake all he was worth on the respectability of his guest.

What impression was made on Miss Westloe, her next speech will evince.—As

they were still scrutinizing Mr. Domville, the dinner bell rung.

“ Lord, cried she, dinner time already ! Dear Mamma, have the dinner put off a little longer,—*I can't think of coming down in such a figure.*”

Her father, in gratitude for the benefit of her assistance, was now for indulging her in this wish, although the concession militated against the very motive that summoned him to the conference room.

The young lady and her maid hastily withdrew ; Mr. Westloe went down to his guest, and after a further delay of half an hour, a *third* notification for dinner being given, the latter was ushered into the eating room, wherein the ladies in becoming costume awaited his appearance. The usual exchange of bows, courtesies, smiles and apologies being made, they sat down to their

meal, the various dishes whereof were carved, recommended and discussed, and the time passed away agreeably enough.

On the removal of the cloth, Mr. Westloe began to make free with the bottle, laid down the law on this and on that subject, although several times called to order by his lady, who desired him not to be so vehement, it *shook her nerves so*; for the which rebuke he called her a silly, timorous creature:—his dear little puss. Lydia also chided her mamma, saying, she loved to see a gentleman warm,—that it became him. Mr. Domville moderately pledged his challenger, and contrived to entertain the ladies till they withdrew.

His open hearted Entertainer, now, by the influence of wine made more communicative, entered into family details, which we will spare the reader, except what goes

to illustrate the purpose of the present chapter.

“ Sir, allowing for every drawback, and every individual is cursed with some, be the same more or less, I have reason to consider myself, on the whole, a fortunate mortal.—To be sure my servants are the plague of my life,—for all I can do, no gentleman is worse served than I am: however I will soon make a clearance, that I am determined.—Then, again, my tenants, whether the rents be high or low, their grumblings are incessant; however there remains one remedy: a fresh set I will have; my attorney shall give them all notice to quit, that is resolved upon.—I am also bored through and through with the gentry, as they are called, of this neighbourhood; a more stupid set of drivellers exist not on earth, not one idea have they of

their own,—I have a great mind to cut them all,—I shall certainly do so, one of these days.—Now to come nearer home. There is this solemn rib of mine : she is perpetually annoying me with her prognostics, her suspicions, her silly tremors : it is hard that my strong nerves should be discomposed by the weakness of her nervous system. But the whole sex are become hippish, and even our gentlemen are *womanized* with similar fancies.—They also must have their blue devils, forsooth. A scrubbing brush into the hands of the one, and a spade into the hands of the other, would soon drive these devils into smoke. Indeed, my good sir, we are degenerating very fast : a melancholy consideration this ! But what was I talking about ?”

“ Mrs. Westloe’s nerves was the subject you introduced.”

“ Very true,—do you know that she is a sedulous reader of the newspapers; but what vexes me most is that the leading topics, religion, politics, the national debt, debates in parliament, letters from *Civis* to *Philopatria*, and the replies thereto, go for nothing with her; her whole attention is absorbed in accounts of births, marriages and deaths.—One cur is born and the other dies—a pretty subject this for the attention of a rational creature! But what is most palatable to her taste is the black catalogue of murders, executions, and night robberies: here her soul revels on the luxurious repast; they have the same effect on her trembling nerves, as stories of spectres and apparitions had on our credulous forefathers. So baneful the perusal becomes that, towards evening, every knock at the outer door is construed

into an attempt at breaking into the house. No newspaper shall henceforth enter my doors, except for my own private perusal; I will most assuredly see to that:—one plague will be then removed.—Come, Sir, fill your glass.—But then another plague starts up.—My Liddy is really a good girl; she has a splice of the father in her, yet she gave me some uneasiness. Confound these theatricals! They are only traps for girls of fortune. Here I am daily pestered with the visit of a spoutin Captain on half pay: I know he has an eye to my daughter; I taxed her with it, and I positively declared to her, that I set my face completely against any connection of that nature—that I would not hear of it, on any account, and there is an end on't. However, I should have shewn him the outside of the door, long ago, but

the fellow, some how, contrives to be useful during these long winter nights: a few hits at backgammon are indispensable to go through them, without dozing away the hours till bed-time; but for all that, I am resolved the Captain shall march off.——”

He had hardly done speaking, when the gay, identical, Man of War made his appearance.

“ Ah Captain! Are you come? Sit down, man, to a glass of wine.—Mr. Domville, Captain Baldrick — Captain Baldrick, Mr. Domville. — Now, Gentlemen, fill your glasses, I will give you a toast.”

However the free use of the bottle was not allowed to become an orgie, as it was too often the case with the master of the house. Miss Westloe, on perceiving from her watch-tower, I mean her chamber

window, the entrance of the Captain, gave orders for the evening meal to be brought into the tea-room, whither the gentlemen were summoned, to which summons the two younger readily complied; but the elder thus disturbed, demurred, growled out his dissent, would have tea-parties interdicted, and would remain to the last true to the bottle; however, finding himself in a minority, he took a parting glass and followed the same direction, mumbling curses against petticoat government, to which *he*, for one, would *never* submit.

During the meal, Domville saw enough to ascertain the good understanding that prevailed between the Captain and Miss Westloe; yet it will soon appear that the young lady fancied herself in love only “because she was idle*.”

* Rasselas.

The father, in order to make himself some amends for his dereliction of the bottle, challenged the Captain to a hit of backgammon; but the other excused himself, alledging that he had business of importance to transact that very night, the truth of which averment was subsequently established, in a sense quite different from the meaning he intended to convey. With this excuse he, without indulging the company with even one speech in the character of Romeo, departed or pretended to depart.

Our Hero seeing the old gentleman out of humour at his disappointment, good-naturely offered to supply his place; this ready offer revived the suspicions of Mrs. Westloe, which Domville's gentlemanly behaviour had lulled to rest. But the young lady who perhaps had her reasons

for wishing her father stationary at the backgammon table, encouraged the amusement. When she saw the parties deeply engaged in the play, she left the room ; her mother however remained to watch the stranger. It would have been more to the purpose had she watched her daughter's steps.

Hit succeeded hit, without much loss on either side, and the lady seeing that the dice were not more subservient to her guest than to her husband, entered with with due composure, upon the perusal of the newspaper, then just brought in.

Its columns this time happened to be more than usually prolific in robberies and murders ; these tales by ministering to her weakness increased her terrors to such a degree, that every sudden exclamation from her husband's well known voice, a

louder knock with the dice-box on the board, made her start and utter ejaculations of the Lord have mercy on her! Her face appeared to have *lengthened out* from the perusal.

Fortune had prepared a snug birth for this lady, nature intended that she should lay down in it, but not make it her *constant* abode: she suffered however every faculty for exertion to lay dormant. Her favourite maid was her agent; on her devolved every thing that was to be done: the mistress in consequence became languid and spiritless; her mind partook of the weakness of her frame and, having no real calamity to contend with, she became the prey to imaginary ones. It may be laid down as a general maxim that, as the luxuries of society increase, so do the

mental tortures of those who indulge in them to excess.

It growing late, Mr. Domville arose to depart: his entertainer made several attempts to detain him to supper, even the lady earnestly besought his stay; for entertaining now no longer any dread of the stranger, she sought to convert him into a protector against those whom her fears had magnified into disturbers of her peace.

On opening the house door, it rained in torrents, the distance to the Inn was considerable, the offer of a bed was tendered in so hearty, so hospitable a manner by both man and wife that, having delivered the usual apologies for the trouble it would give and so forth, Mr. Domville accepted the offer.

Miss Westloe, however, who returned for supper, her face dressed in smiles, suffered some of them to evaporate on being informed of this further extension of hospitality ; but too well bred to let any inward discontent transpire, she acted her part becomingly, and whatever cause she had for thought, suffered not the sad groupings of care to settle on her brow, but laughed, sang, and even romped away the time, till the party broke up for the night, each retiring to his place of repose.

Mr. Domville, who had a comfortable bed to repose in, soon sunk into a profound repose, but out of which, however, he was aroused in a very unpleasant manner. A number of voices, over which Mr. Westloe's loudly predominated, called

upon him to unlock his chamber door instantly, else it would be burst open. It was in vain that he assured his disturbers that the door was not locked; the assurance had only the effect of inciting them to put their threats into immediate execution.

Ere his nether covering was properly adjusted, the whole *posse* rushed in, calling upon him to restore the young lady, who was missing, or he would be taken before a magistrate, and the law should have its course.

Whilst some were rummaging the closet, looking under the bed, or peeping up the chimney, our Hero coolly remarked that, if he had eloped with Miss Westloe, a lady whom he had never seen before, it was very unlikely that he should be quietly found in this apartment.

“ But why did you tell us a falsehood ?” cried the injured father warmly.

“ Sir, I feel for your situation, else that imputation should not go off unresented. I told you no falsehood.”

“ You assured us the door was not locked ; yet we found the bolt completely drawn.”

“ All that I can aver is, that I did not draw it. But, Mr. Westloe, have you sent to Captain Baldrick’s lodgings ?”

“ True — that should have been first done ; but who can think of every thing ? I am the only one here able to act. You, you and you haste, run, speed, fly ; and if you find him, force him hither at all events. If he is guilty of so flagrant a breach of trust, I’ll move heaven and earth but I will have him hanged for it. As for that ungrateful hussy, she shall

starve upon bread and water, and break her heart and be d——, for what I care. Sir, (to Domville) I thought you a man of honour, and relying upon my own discernment I think so still; but for all that, somebody has broken open my bureau and robbed me of cash to a considerable amount, and I am also told that a part of my plate is gone.”

“ And Mistress has also lost her jewels,” cried a bye-stander.

“ There, there — there — nothing but plagues. An Argus could not prevent such accidents; yet all the care and vexation devolve on me.”

Here a female came hurrying in with the afflicting intelligence that Mrs. Westloe was in fits.

“ The Devil is in the sex, I believe. A pretty time she has pitched upon to be

in fits. It is enough to drive mad the soundest intellect in Christendom."

He went a little way, then returned, and so on several times, in evident irresolution.

"What can I do? How am I to act? pulled about in every direction; here am I robbed of plate, cash, jewels and daughter, and perhaps of my wife——

"And of your garden fruit," cried a voice.

"Well done! worse and worse. I wish to God I were quite destitute, then surely I should enjoy some quiet. Mr. Domville, if you are an innocent man, as I believe you to be, I crave your assistance; I am incumbered with a parcel of idiots about me, and not one efficient person."

Our Hero enquired whether all the ser-

vants could be mustered up. Not one was missing, he replied, except the jade that attended his daughter.

“ Who informed you that Miss Westloe had absconded ? ”

“ I received the first intelligence from my gardener.”

The fact was, that whilst this son of Adam was stripping the garden of its valuables, to be disposed of on his own account, he beheld a gentleman not unlike, he thought, Mr. Domville, whom he had seen yesterday, meet his young lady at the back door, and both step into a post chaise that drove them away. Having completed his job by the safe removal of the fruit, he gave the alarm, rightly conjecturing that the smaller loss would be absorbed in the magnitude of the greater one.

Here a second summons called on Mr.

Westloe to attend his fainting lady ; and he bustled away, although as useless about her person as he was to repair every other disaster of the present emergency.

Our Hero availed himself of the leisure now afforded him to complete his dress ; on consulting his watch, he found that he had hardly sufficient time to reach the office, ere the morning coach was ready to start ; but the present distracted state of the family made it imperative on him to put off his journey, and the more so, as his absence, at that juncture, would not fail being ascribed to the consciousness of guilt.

By this time, the messengers dispatched arrived breathless from the Captain's lodgings, with the information that he had not slept at home and was not to be found : upon this information every voice pro-

nounced him the culprit. Domville advised Mr. Westloe, who now re-appeared, to dispatch persons on horseback in every direction after the fugitives.

Whilst orders were given to that effect, news arrived that the lady was returned and the gentleman also, but the latter in a predicament not quite so gallant, as when he handed his fair partner into the post-chaise that was to carry her away from parental thralldom to connubial freedom.

The parties had little difficulty to encounter in the attempt: the lady having the command of every outlet. To prevent however the chance of obstruction, the maid turned the lock of Mr. Domville's room and took away the key. In addition to the contents of her purse, Miss Westloe was bearer of her mamma's jewels as well as her own. They might

be found serviceable, as she conjectured that the Captain was not overstocked with the needful.

We must however exonerate the young lady from breaking open her father's bureau; that act is to be ascribed to the footman. This fellow had long watched for an opportunity, and having overheard their plan and time of escape, he conceived that a fair chance was now offered him to become rich with impunity, as the theft would naturally be imputed to the absentees.

Thus far every thing went on prosperously with the Plotters, but lo!—Here upstarts a *Marplot*, in the shape of a dashing London Tailor, after this guise.

A bill to the amount of £120 (we will omit shillings and pence) was due from Captain Baldrick for a plentiful supply

of clothes of the fashionable cut : he had been dunned for the payment of the same, but fancied that he had averted the impending calamity of a writ, by having given an assurance of a speedy discharge, upon the strength of his going to marry a rich heiress. But our experienced Tailor construed this information into a mere *fetch*, fit only to gull *Tyros* in the trade. A Sheriff's substitute, previously well acquainted with our captain's person and furnished with the legal instrument, was the agent dispatched in behalf of the Creditor.

As ill luck would have it, the coach on which our eagle-eyed catchpole was hoisted, happened to stop before the inn, at the very time the lady and her paramour were alighting from their vehicle, to take some refreshment, whilst horses were changing.

Without loss of time, the *civil* officer presented to the *military* one his unwelcome credentials, the potentiality whereof proving an overmatch for the stock of cash in hand, the fugitives, fain to admit the company of their now legal *Custos*, were brought back to the same town they had started from, four hours before.

Mr. Domville now conceiving that his presence could be dispensed with, was for making his parting bow, when loud and hurried raps at the outer door, gave so electrifying a shock to tottering Mrs. Westloe, that she had only strength to ejaculate a faint shriek; and the gentleman, with the alacrity usual on such occasions, had hardly time to place her on the sofa—when—with the bold, decisive step of both Queen and Heroine, entered somewhat flurried, the fair cause of

all this confusion. Resentment settled on her brow, indignation scowled from her eye, her bosom heaved and her face glowed with contending emotions, of which she appeared to wait for an abatement, ere she trusted herself with giving utterance to the passionate strains ready to burst from her lips.

At this period, our Disciplinarian could only stare in utter astonishment, undecided in what tone and words *his* rebuke should be conveyed. The mother however, went so far as to utter,—“Oh, Liddy, Liddy! How could you have been so naughty?”

“Now, Mother, you are beginning as usual.—I protest, it is enough to provoke a saint.—Never was a young creature so ill treated as I have been.”

“And really, Girl, you *deserved it all*,” was the father’s intended reply, but, dashed

by her Amazonian air, the latter part of the phrase was supplied by a throat-clearing—*hem*; whilst Miss Westloe, with mien erect, and with animated, haughty, demeanour, expressive of anger and wounded pride, whether really felt or politically assumed, was pacing up and down the apartment, shaking and even smacking at times her slender whip.—Thus she otherwise evinced her resentment, authoritatively assuming the tone and manner of an injured person.

“Never was one so deceived,—never did any body witness so sudden a change.—A paltry fellow with all his pretensions!—Mean and dastardly.—At first no fault could be found with the man: his manner of carrying me off was well enough, and so forth. But, when some shabby, vulgar, ill looking wretch presented him with a dirty piece of paper, I never beheld

such a sneaking, sniveling, alteration. Instead of soundly horse-whipping the fellow for his impudence, and kicking him round and out of the room, he hemmed and hawed, and begged and prayed, and wheedled and coaxed to no purpose. Well, hardly were we re-seated in the post-chaise, but in steps the odious creature, as if in his own right.—Only conceive, Mother, how distressing!—There was I, for miles, obliged to bear this man's presence: his coarse, rugged, black-bearded, visage facing me, his dirty clothes defiling mine, and I inhaling the fumes of gin, beer, and tobacco, that this delectable personage had collected from every pot-house.—I loudly called on the captain to order or throw him out of the carriage.—He could only shrug up his shoulders, look pitiful, and hang down his head. How I do detest him! Nay, he had the meanness to inquire whe-

ther our joint purses could not satisfy the demand. — Now, though I would have given the world to be rid of the intruder, I replied that I would not be one shilling towards thus compounding for his removal. — He a captain ! there's not a drummer in any British regiment, but would have acted more manfully. I am really under some obligation to the man for having thus detected the Impostor. Only think, Pa,—a sword and pistols at hand, and not used ! By my troth, I now entertain so mean an opinion of this captain Baldrick, that of the two, I had rather run away with the catchpole."

As our Virago delivered this voluble, impassionate, strain, she really looked very interesting. She was dressed in a light blue riding habit that much became her : her hat saucily thrown backwards, over which waved a well-supplied ostrich feather curving elegantly downwards, her

raven locks in graceful confusion sporting about the skirts of her plump, rosy, round, visage ; some, as she indignantly tossed her head, bobbed the frowning brows of her full, black, sparkling eyes ; the disorder in her dress well accorded with her glowing features and the vehemence of her action, which was further attested by the frequent smacking of her whip.

Domville longed to be the happy mortal that was to pacify her. The mother, whose nerves had been excessively flurried, dreading some tragical termination, sat in stupid amazement and in tremors. But the silly father, enraptured at witnessing such undeniable symptoms of her being a chip of the old block, caught her in his arms, crying out, “ A brave Wench ! by all that is gamesome !!! ” * * * * *

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We shall not proceed any further, except just to state, that it was however deemed advisable to consign the young lady to an aunt of her's residing in town, till other follies, from other quarters, had cast over the present a faint shade of oblivion. The Captain regained his release, upon mortgaging twenty-five pounds per annum out of his half pay, until the whole claim, with cost, be liquidated. The maid, sheltering herself under the protection of her young mistress, in spite of the Elders, retained her situation ; the footman wisely absconded with his booty, on miss Westloe's re-appearance ; but that *some* poetical justice be done, the gardener was turned adrift, mulct of his wages, a year of which was nearly due.

We may, however, be allowed to remark that, tho' poetical justice does not al-

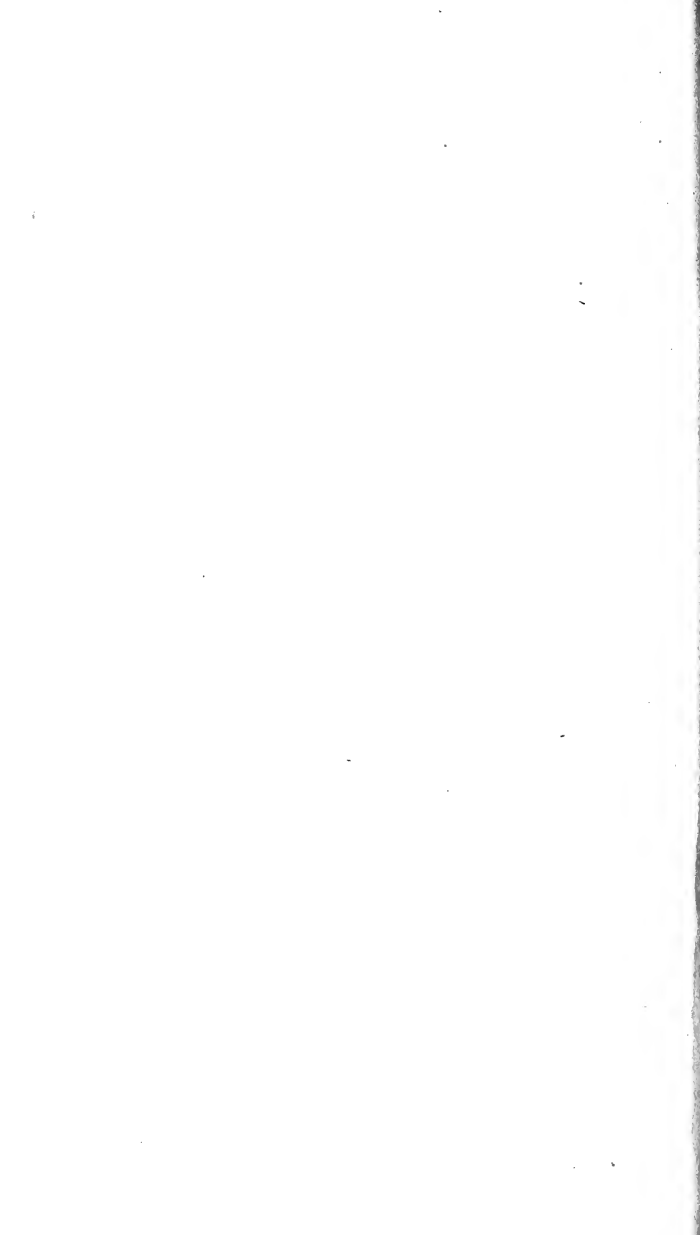
ways attend the more striking incidents on the stage of life ; yet, by daily, hourly, vexations, it seldom fails to extort a severe retribution from those Performers, who have dared to violate its integrity.

We here close this Volume, indulging a hope that the perusal of its contents will induce the Reader to take up the second : and we venture to promise him that we have (so Vanity whispers us) something better in store.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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